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LITERARY AND HISTORICAL

MISCELLANIES

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VOL. II

STIRLINGSHIRE
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II

VIGNETTES

XIV

THE PORTRAITS OF BURNS[1]

Manifold are the statues of Burns, but of busts or statues taken from life there is not one. There is not even a cast taken after death (though we have the cast of his skull), inestimably precious as it would be now. We have to some extent, therefore, to idealise our statues of Burns: though not so much so as in the case of that statue of Highland Mary which was erected the other day—a graceful tribute to a charming character, but one of whom we possess no likeness whatever. Still of Burns we have nothing but canvas, and canvas that is not wholly satisfactory, for the engraving (which was, after all, touched from life) always seems to me far more powerful and lifelike than the original painting—to give much more of the vigour of the face and the spirit flashing through the eyes. Skirving's head, again, refined and exquisite as it is, seems to me more delicate and less human than the man as we have him described by such eye-witnesses as Kirkpatrick Sharpe. At any rate we have ample scope in a statue of Burns for idealisation; and,

[1] From a speech delivered at Paisley on September 26, 1896, at the unveiling of a statue of Burns.

XIV. after all, that is not a bad thing, if we cannot have an image taken directly from life and approved as a close likeness by contemporaries.

Let us try and realise what he was like. We often please ourselves with fancies of what such and such a character would look like if he walked into the room where we are sitting. It is perhaps a vain effort, for our surroundings baffle us. How can we fancy Moses, or Homer, or Caesar, or St. Paul, or Attila, or Peter the Hermit walking into our library? The mere furniture scares the idea. Luther in his monk's dress we can conceive, for the dress remains unchanged. And when we get down to the era of portraiture, we can strain our imaginations to see the subjects of Holbein and Rembrandt and Vandyke walking out of their frames, and so on to our own times; until we can realise men who never existed, such as Pickwick or Colonel Newcome, or even Squire Western or Moses Primrose, without a wrench. The difficulty really lies, not in the form or face of a man, but in the embodiment of that inexplicable force called genius. You can realise perhaps the face; what none can realise is the manner and degree in which genius animated it. Their eyes did not always gleam, their nostrils did not always dilate, their lips did not always curl—perhaps they never did; they were not always the figures portrayed for us in works of imagination—perhaps they never were. But nevertheless one could not be with them for long without seeing in their faces that they were different from their fellows. What, then, was Burns like so far as we can tell?

We have, as it happens, few more vivid portraits of Burns than that sketched in your own town. A hundred and nine years ago Burns visited Paisley. Nine years ago would have been the centenary of that visit, and perhaps the fittest opportunity for erecting this statue. The recollection of one who saw him then is distinct—"of a big, stout, athletic man, of a brown, ruddy complexion, broad-chested, erect, and standing firmly on his legs, which perhaps were rather clumsy, though hid in yellow top-boots. His dress was a blue coat and buckskin breeches, and his caste seemed what we should now style that of a gentleman farmer." But the observer was struck with a certain gloominess that seemed to have possession of his countenance and general bearing. As he stood at noonday in the street, an ardent admirer, who readily recognised him from his portrait, took him home. Burns then made the remark that "perhaps people were apt to attach more merit to poetry than was its due, for that after all it was only natural ideas expressed in melodious words." There we see the true poetic nature, for poetry is much more than this; but as it freely flowed from Burns, it seemed little or nothing to him. XIV.

But there are a score of word portraits of Burns. Walter Scott's, so well known, is one of the best. Here is the last living one, and one of the most curious: "He was brought back" (from Brow Well), "I think, in a covered spring cart, and when he alighted at the foot of the street in which he lived, he could scarcely stand upright. He reached his door with difficulty.

XIV. He stooped much, and there was a visible change in his looks. Some may think it not unimportant to know that he was at that time dressed in a blue coat with the undress nankeen pantaloons of the Volunteers, and that his neck, which was inclining to be short, caused his hat to turn up behind in the manner of the shovel hats of the Episcopal clergy. Truth obliges me to add that he was not fastidious about his dress."

And here is the last: "He lay in a plain unadorned coffin with a linen sheet drawn over his face, and on the bed and around the body herbs and flowers were thickly strewn, according to the usage of the country. He was wasted somewhat by long illness, but death had not changed the swarthy hue of his face, which was uncommonly dark and deeply marked. The dying pang was visible in the lower part, but his broad and open brow was pale and serene, and around it his sable hair lay in masses slightly touched with grey, and inclined more to wave than to curl."

XV

THE LOVE EPISODE OF WILLIAM PITT[1]

It is at last possible, by piecing together the letters in the possession of Captain Ernest Pretyman, M.P., and Mr. Dickinson, Mayor of Bath and M.P. for Wells, to present the correspondence between Mr. Pitt and Lord Auckland with reference to Miss Eden; and this, by their kindness, I am now enabled to do. Mr. Dickinson, it may be mentioned, is the great-nephew of the Miss Eden in question, who afterwards became Lady Buckinghamshire. Parts of these papers have already been published by Lord Ashbourne, who had not, however, access to all the letters. And in any case there would be no need for reticence, for the episode is as historical as any affair of the kind, while it derives a peculiar interest from Pitt's persistent celibacy, as well as from the obscurity that overhangs his motives; for he gives no definite reason for his action.

The account of these letters, therefore, given by Lord Stanhope in his *Life of Pitt*, on the authority of "a person entirely to be relied upon,

[1] Introduction to *Letters relating to the Love Episode of William Pitt*. Printed for private circulation, 1900.

xv. who has more than once perused them," is too circumstantial to be accurate.

"Mr. Pitt began the subject. In his letter to Lord Auckland he avows in the warmest terms his affection for Miss Eden, but explains that in his circumstances he feels that he cannot presume to make her an offer of marriage. He further states that he finds each of his succeeding visits adds so much to his unhappiness that he thinks it will be best to remit them for the present. The reply of Lord Auckland, as I am informed, acknowledges as adequate the explanation of Mr. Pitt. He was already, he says, aware in general of the circumstances of pecuniary debt and difficulty in which Mr. Pitt had become involved. He does not deny that the attachment of Mr. Pitt may have been fully appreciated, and he wishes that the marriage should still take place. . . . There were yet two further letters as to the manner in which the notes of congratulation which had already begun to arrive at Beckenham might best be answered. Pitt desired that the blame, if any, should be borne wholly by himself."

The account in the *Journal and Correspondence of Lord Auckland*, edited by his son, who was Bishop of Bath and Wells, is not substantially different. The Bishop gives an extract from Pitt's first letter, and adds: "He (Pitt) blames himself for not having sooner looked into his difficulties, which he now finds have become insurmountable." This, it will be seen, is a gloss of the Bishop's own, unless, which scarcely seems possible, he had access to other papers on which he bases it. He adds that "several letters

passed between him and Lord Auckland, suggesting arrangements by which the marriage might in time take place without imprudence; but they were unavailing." This too is scarcely an accurate description of the letters as we have them. There is, it may be noted, a tone of bitterness in the Bishop's subsequent allusions to Pitt. xv.

"The person entirely to be relied upon" misled, as will be seen, Lord Stanhope and the authors who followed him. Pitt was a master of that marvellous circumlocutory diction which was required by eighteenth-century ideas of dignity, as well as by the apprehension that letters might be opened and so should not be too explicit. In this style he explains himself, and leaves the causes of action to inference. But it can scarcely be doubted that Lord Stanhope was substantially correct. Pitt's shattered and neglected finances made it impossible for him to make any provision for a wife. It would have been a mortification to his proud spirit to admit this. Moreover, he was well aware that his health was broken, and that he held to life by a precarious tenure. Under these circumstances he was forced to realise that, should he marry, his wife might soon be a widow, and a widow dependent on the bounty of the nation. Pitt could never have brooked such a contingency. These are obvious and sufficient grounds—indeed, they scarcely left him an option. But it may also be suspected that when things came to a point, and when Pitt was in a position to survey calmly the prospect before him, he shrank, after

xv. a life of retired and easy celibacy, from the unknown liabilities and engagements of marriage. Moreover, he may not have cared to be hampered by a family connection with a politician so eager and so ambitious as Auckland. Every consideration, then, except the personal fascination of a charming girl, prompted him to the course which he adopted.

All this, however, is mere surmise, though, as regards the financial reasons for Pitt's action, it is shared by Auckland himself. Pitt merely says that "the obstacles are decisive and insurmountable." But on the other side of the correspondence there is a strange feature which appears to have escaped Lord Ashbourne. It is clear that Auckland, in a letter written on the morning of January 23, 1797, had suggested that the Privy Seal should be conferred upon him. Pitt, in acknowledging this letter, which does not appear now to exist, says: "Another [gratification] and a most essential one indeed would be if I saw my way to an immediate accomplishment of the arrangement you point at." And then he refers to the difficulty of finding a means of dealing with the prior claims of Lord Mornington. Auckland, in a reply dated the same night, leaves us in no doubt of the "arrangement," which he urges, indeed, with passion. "It is essential," he says, "to me, and still more to mine, to have as soon as possible an ostensible and honourable pretext for throwing ourselves once more into the full tide of courts and of London society." It is further important that the public should see that the friendship between

Pitt and himself is undiminished. He cannot see that Mornington's pretensions offer any obstacle, if Pitt should state at once that he wished to dispose immediately of the Privy Seal. "To me and to mine," he concludes, "it is essential *now*. . . . It would not perhaps be too much to add that, if deferred now, it ought never to be renewed." With regard, however, to this strange and ingenious proposal, by which office was demanded as a sort of compensation for Pitt's withdrawal, Pitt stood firm. He could not lend himself to a combination by which public office and his private affections were brought into direct relation. XV.

He did not then give Auckland office. They, however, continued on terms of friendly intercourse, and fourteen months afterwards, when there could be no connection between the two events, Pitt bestowed on Auckland the post of Joint Postmaster-General. Finally, in January 1801, there was a breach, which in March became irreparable. Auckland is supposed to have conveyed to the King, through his brother-in-law the Primate, the intelligence of Pitt's projected Catholic policy, and in March he made a speech which in the opinion of Pitt cast doubts on the honour and good faith of the Minister in leaving his post. In January Pitt wrote Auckland a curt note of farewell. After the speech of March he never again spoke to him. The latter continued in office through the Addington Administration, but on Pitt's return to power he dismissed the Postmaster. Auckland himself thought that he had been hardly used, and his son-in-law Bucking-

xv. hamshire (then Lord Hobart), who was now the husband of Eleanor Eden, wrote that he "could not reflect on his (Pitt's) duplicity and harshness without feelings that it would be impossible to express by any terms which it would be decent to put upon paper." Into that controversy it is needless to enter. Pitt, however, managed, with the remarkable facility of those days, to settle an additional pension on Lady Auckland, so that her husband should not suffer in fortune by his deprivation of office. For this favour Auckland wrote a letter of warm and not undignified gratitude, signing himself "Ever affectionately and sincerely yours." That was the last of their long correspondence.

And so begins and ends this strange tender episode—this secret mirage in a long aridity of office. Hints of it were abroad, which will be found, here and there, in the *Auckland Correspondence*; but the facts were probably not known. Pitt, we may be sure, mentioned it to no one. He was himself probably surprised when he realised his situation, and found himself face to face with a position where it was honourably imperative to declare himself on so delicate and painful a point.

It has been noticed that one predisposing motive for Pitt's behaviour may have been that he could not but be aware, from the state of his health, that his life was in serious jeopardy. And so it seems logical and convenient to add to these letters Sir Walter Farquhar's account of Mr. Pitt's health, which Captain Pretyman permits me to do. It will be seen that two years before

the Eden episode Sir Walter had found Mr. Pitt in a condition of debility which imperatively called for repose. In the very year of the above-mentioned correspondence with Auckland his health declined still further. Bad as it was, it was only maintained at all by unflinching devotion to his public duties. For Sir Walter tells us that on Pitt's resignation in 1801 his condition changed largely for the worse. His nights were restless and troubled; he vomited almost every morning; he shrank from all nourishment; the very sight of dinner brought on a fit of retching. He himself said with good-humoured irony that he had at last baffled the art of medicine. In this melancholy state he returned to office. While engaged in his desperate struggle, at once with Napoleon and with the House of Commons, "he could retain nothing on his stomach, nor could he sit down to dinner without being sick." It might seem difficult to enhance our admiration for his courage and spirit at that juncture, but Sir Walter's account of his illness sensibly raises the estimate of both. The Minister who was grappling with the mightiest of modern conquerors, and, at the head of a meagre and mediocre following, resisting the unholy alliance of all parliamentary forces, was sustaining this unequal combat without the capacity of even seeing food without nausea. In the meantime Farquhar constantly urged on him the vital and obvious necessity for retirement. "But Mr. Pitt's memorable reply was that his country needed his services, and he would rather prefer to die at his post than desert it." xv.

xv. Under these circumstances it did not need the skilled eye of a physician to see that death, at the post of duty, could not long be deferred. Soon after Pitt's summary answer to Farquhar he became overpowered by increasing symptoms of disease and the pressure of public business. He retired to Bath, where he became worse. After the arrival of despatches the most alarming symptoms, we are told, invariably increased. There seemed no organic mischief, but he was a wreck. "The mind was constantly acting upon a weak frame of body, and exhaustion was the consequence of this sympathetic action. . . . The proceedings," says Sir Walter, "against his friend Lord Melville, and, more recently, the result of the Battle of Austerlitz, produced effects on the health of Mr. Pitt from which he never recovered." From Bath he returned home to Putney. At first there was a flicker of hope. The patient promised to give up business for a time, and there was a consequent improvement. So Farquhar leaves him one day, but returns the next to find him sensibly worse. Pitt avows the truth. "Sir Walter," he says, "I have been compelled to disobey your injunctions—I have done too much. When in conversation with persons upon important business, I felt suddenly as if I had been cut in two." So, less than a fortnight after his arrival at Putney, he was dead.

One more personal point may be noticed. In Pitt's latest portraits he is represented with white or at least grey hair. This does not seem surprising to us, who are accustomed to see grey

hair at an earlier age than Pitt's, under much lighter cares. But it is certain that Pitt's hair was untouched except by the art of the hair-dresser. At Orwell there is a lock of it cut off after death. It is soft and brown, but the paper which contains it is full of hair-powder. So that the Minister who taxed that adornment must have continued to wear it to the last.

XVI

NELSON [1]

XVI. To be asked to write a preface on a centenary does not seem out of the way, for prefaces and centenaries are both unhappily common. But to write a preface for a magazine number devoted to the centenary of Nelson's death is a less commonplace affair. For Nelson stands alone. There is no figure like his among all those who have ploughed the weary seas. The great drama which ended in tragic triumph at Trafalgar, which we commemorate this year, has had innumerable epilogues. That makes it no easier to write a prologue to-day. And yet the tribute is in some sort a debt; while the catastrophe in all its details is familiar to every one of us. The Englishman who has stood on the spot where Nelson died is conscious of an emotion which he feels at few other shrines. It is then so easy to picture the death-scene that the immortal cockpit becomes peopled with the ghosts of the battle, and one sees it all. Between the low decks the stricken chief is borne in and laid down, covered with a handkerchief lest his wound take the heart

[1] Preface to the Trafalgar Centenary number of the *United Service Magazine*, October 1905.

out of the fight : past him flow the rush and hub-bub of the half-naked sailors and powder-monkeys, ignorant as yet of the calamity ; some perhaps, more vigilant, glancing with consternation at the frail body, from which the life-blood flows fast, but all of them black and glowing with the sweat and passion of conflict ; all around the groans of the wounded, the careless corpses of the dead, the scuppers running with blood ; and outside the dull thunder of the cannon, the piercing rattle of the musketry, the curses and the cheers, all the reek and tumult and raging mystery of the battle ; —it is in this fitting and stormy scene that the great soul leaves its wasted frame. XVI.

He is told of the victory that lights up his death agony. Did he see it all with the inspiration of death ?—that he had won not merely a great victory, but one of the decisive battles of the world ? that the cannon of Trafalgar had not merely shattered fleets, but dealt the first mortal blow to the Conqueror, and saved the Empire ? At any rate, the wing of the eagle was clipped.

He thinks of the woman who has been the baleful light of his life. Then he thinks of the Service, of which he has been the idol and the champion. " Kiss me, Hardy," he says ; and with that embrace Nelson, it would seem, bade farewell to the Navy.

All this is easy enough to picture as we stand on the old *Victory*, a nobler shrine than Westminster Abbey, because simple and solitary ; more fitting even than the grand sweep of St. Paul's for the sepulchre of Nelson. One may well wish, as one stands there, that Nelson's body

XVI. was still there : the *Victory*, so long as she floats, would be his proper tomb. But as that is not possible, it is yet permitted to wish that no ship in our Navy should be launched without bearing on board, in some shape or another, the stimulating effigy of the supreme British Admiral.

Why is it that he is not merely the unique sailor, but the war-hero of our country ? We cannot, like the Americans, condense our worship of civil and military virtues in a single figure like that of Washington. We find our various types of excellence in different individuals. But Nelson is our war-hero. Why this should be so, it is not easy to say. Britain sent two transcendent warriors to fight against Napoleon. The first died a century ago. The last lived into the memories of many living people. The last was honoured during his lifetime more and longer than any British subject in all history—justly honoured, for he had grimly fought his way through the Spanish Peninsula to the confines of France, and, finally, had put a definite end to the peril embodied in the name of Napoleon.

Why, then, is it that the memory of the first is so green among us, and that of Wellington so comparatively dim ?

The explanation is not easy. A cynic might say that the reason lay in Nelson's avoidance of politics. There is a grain of truth in this. Political generals and political admirals are rarely popular in Great Britain. Now it is obvious that Nelson was no politician, for Addington was his favourite minister. Simpleton as he was in so many ways, he wrote to Addington with en-

thusiasm : " I am your admiral." Others would allege as a cause the glorious circumstances of Nelson's death. There is something in that also ; but it is clearly inadequate. For even in life there was this notable difference : Wellington's soldiers trusted him ; Nelson's sailors trusted and loved him. XVI.

Again, it must be remembered that the sea is the British element ; that our sailors have generally been more popular than our soldiers. We have had in the past two generals who rank in the first class, however and wherever that class may be computed—Marlborough and Wellington ; and neither were, strictly speaking, popular. Perhaps the only darling figure in our past military history is that gallant spendthrift Granby, who still swings on many a tavern sign. But in our long list of sea-kings we can call to mind many who inspired affection as well as admiration. Chief among these towers Nelson.

There are other reasons. There was, perhaps, the fascinating incongruity of so great a warrior's soul being encased in so shrivelled a shell. Then there was his chivalrous devotion to his officers and men ; their interests and their honour were his own. There was the manifest and surpassing patriotism. There was the easy confidence of victory. In him the pugnacious British instinct was incarnate : with Nelson to see the foe was to fight him ; he only found himself in the fury of battle. His unwearied pertinacity was not less remarkable. For twenty-six months he did not set foot on land. He hunted the enemy's fleet from Malta to the mouths of the Orinoco with

XVI. the relentless and untiring ferocity of a sleuth-hound, and back again to Europe. Again, he was brilliantly single-minded, unselfish, and unsordid. His only covetousness was that of Henry V.—

> But, if it be a sin to covet honour,
> I am the most offending soul alive.

All these qualities appealed irresistibly to mankind.

But the main cause of his popularity, splendour of victory apart, is broader and simpler—Nelson was eminently human. Vain and simple as a child; open and generous to a fault; the prey of a vulgar adventuress, who lured him to the one discredit of his life; he was easily understood and heartily appreciated by the people. Characteristic sayings and doings of his, such as the people love, were universally bandied about: the racing to the masthead to encourage his timid midshipmen; the placing the telescope to his blind eye when the signal to withdraw was hoisted, which he was determined not to see; the signal of Trafalgar, "Nelson expects every man to do his duty," happily changed to "England expects every man to do his duty"; the pithy "Victory or Westminster Abbey!" Traits like these went home. His sailors came home talking of nothing but Nelson, his gaiety, his courage, his resource. These stories, swollen to legends, rang through the land. To this was added the sense of ill-usage—a great secret of popularity. Our tape-bound Governments always found some crusted veteran to put over Nelson's head. For his glorious

victory of Copenhagen no medal was given. But the more the idol was flouted, the dearer he became. And so, when he set out for the last battle, his departure was a triumph ; he had to be protected from the adoration of the crowd. And so, when he died, men felt that England in gaining the victory had yet lost on the balance. Trafalgar was the only public event that ever deprived Pitt of sleep. The Armada was crushed, but Nelson was dead. England had received an almost mortal blow ; for Nelson embodied England. XVI.

Peace and glory to his ashes ! We shall not look upon his like again. Of his achievements it is needless to speak, for the echo of his exploits still rings in our ears. Austere moralists may easily, and indeed justly, reprobate glaring parts of his career. He loved not wisely, but too well. He committed at Naples an act little, if at all, short of a crime. But spots, even the blackest, are invisible on great luminaries ; and only on great luminaries are they invisible. Nor was he heedless of his errors. In the hour of death he was mindful of the day of judgement. Let them that are free of stain cast the stone.

Nelson, then, is the greatest of our heroes, and the dearest to ourselves ; we feel this in the marrow of our bones, though we cannot so readily explain it. He is also in the eyes of the world the one unrivalled thunderbolt that England has forged. We can boast of no more unquestioned genius, no truer patriot, no soul more instinct with the sacred fire of high ambition. But we know of no stranger mixture of the fatuous with the sublime. He is indeed unique.

XVII

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON[1]

XVII. I NEVER knew or saw Robert Louis Stevenson face to face, and I am speaking among numbers here who knew him from childhood almost till he left this country for good. His mother is here. How, then, can I, in her presence, and in the presence of those friends who knew him so well, pretend to take a prominent part on this occasion? My part was a perfectly simple one. I wrote to the papers a genuine inquiry. I could not but believe that in this age of memorials and testimonials some stone or cairn had been put up to the memory of Robert Louis Stevenson. I should have been confident that such a memorial had been put up but for one trifling, though capital, circumstance—I had never been asked for a subscription; and therefore I came to the conclusion that there were grave doubts as to whether any such movement had taken place. My inquiry has, I suppose, landed me in this chair.

But I have been trying to make out some sort of relation to the genius we commemorate to-day

[1] Speech delivered in Edinburgh on December 10, 1896, at a meeting called to consider the question of a Scottish memorial to Stevenson.

which should entitle me to be in this place. Somewhere or other Robert Louis Stevenson has said that the two places which appealed most powerfully to his imagination are Burford Bridge and the Hawes Inn, at Queensferry. Now, it so chances that close to both those places I have pitched my tent, or had my tent pitched for me. Burford Bridge you probably do not all know. It is a place where Keats composed part of his *Endymion*; where Nelson bade farewell to Lady Hamilton. It is near the spot where Talleyrand took refuge from the Revolution; where Miss Burney first saw her husband, and where she spent the best years of her life. The Hawes Inn, at Queensferry, you probably know much better. I do not mean in the character of *bona fide* travellers, but rather as pilgrims to a sacred haunt; for it is there that the genius of Sir Walter Scott and the genius of his successor first grasped each other by the hand; for it is in the Hawes Inn, simple structure as it is, that the first act of the *Antiquary* and the first act of *Kidnapped* are both laid. It is a solace to me to think that Sir Walter Scott certainly, and Robert Louis Stevenson I think certainly too, never saw that inn as it is now, overstridden and overridden by that monster of utility the Forth Bridge, which has added so immensely to the convenience and detracted so materially from the romance of that locality. Well, I have another claim to be here, but it is a claim that I have only in common with you all, and that is of being an ardent admirer of Robert Louis Stevenson and his work. XVII.

XVII. To-day is not the moment—we have not the time, and it would require a literary capacity to which I make no pretence—to-day is not the opportunity to enter into any review of the works of Stevenson. But there are two or three points to which, as an outside reader, I must call your attention before I sit down. The first is the style of the man himself—it was a tool carefully finished and prepared by himself in order the better to work out the business to which his genius led him. I daresay many of you may think that style is a light, accidental art of inspiration which comes easily to a gifted writer. But what does Stevenson say himself? "Whenever a book or a passage particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and I knew it, and tried again, and was again unsuccessful, and always unsuccessful. But at least in these vain bouts I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction, and the co-ordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, and Oberman." And to these he adds afterwards, in a later passage, Ruskin, Browning, Morris, Keats, Swinburne, Chaucer, Webster, Congreve, and Thackeray; and he sums it all up by saying, "*that*, like it or not, is the way to write." If a dullard were to pursue that practice which Stevenson enjoins, he would

at the end of it be probably only as at the beginning, a "sedulous ape." But with Stevenson there was the genius to mould what he had acquired by this painful practice. Mr. Fox said of Mr. Pitt that he himself (Mr. Fox) had always a command of words, but that Mr. Pitt had always a command of the right words, and that is the quality which strikes us in the style of Stevenson. I do not know whether his method was easy or laborious. I strongly suspect it may have been laborious, but, whichever it was, he never was satisfied with any word which did not fully embody the idea that he had in his mind, and therefore you have in his style something suggestive, something musical, something pregnant, a splendid vehicle for whatever he had to say. XVII.

He was not satisfied with style; he infused into his style a spirit which, for want of a better word, I can only call a spirit of irony of the most exquisite kind. He, as you know, adopted a style of diction which reminds us sometimes more of Addison's *Spectator* or Steele's *Tatler* than of the easier and more emotional language of these later days. But as he put into these dignified sentences this spirit which, for want of a better word, I must call irony, he relieved what otherwise might have been heavy. Now, I think you will all recognise what I mean when I speak of this spirit of irony. You will find it in, I think, every page of his works. I do not mean that of the savage and gruesome parable which has added a household word to the English language, and which is called *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*,

XVII. but I will take one instance from one of the works of his highest imagination, *The New Arabian Nights*. He takes Rudolf out of *The Mysteries of Paris*, and puts him down in London as a plump and respectable Prince of Bohemia, bent on adventure, but comfortably situated, hovering always between the sublime and the ridiculous, till the author at last makes up his mind for the ridiculous and settles him down in a cigar divan. But no one can read the account of Florizel, Prince of Bohemia, without recognising the essential quality of irony which makes Stevenson's style so potent. In some of his books he develops an even more bitter power of the same kind. In *The Dynamiter* you will find that in a form sometimes which by neither Swift nor Thackeray could be excelled. The picture of the scheming dynamiter, full of the high impulse of his mission, and constantly baffled by the cruel fate of circumstances in his efforts for an exhaustive explosion, is perhaps one of the most powerful instances of sardonic treatment to be met with in the whole history of English literature.

I cannot take instances of satire, because I should have to refer you to every page, but I will take the third point on which I wish to dwell for one moment this afternoon—it is that the dramatic, realistic power of imagination, which, as I conceive, added to the style and the spirit of lambent irony which pervades Stevenson's works, is what has raised him a head and shoulders above his fellows. Now I suppose at this moment we can all conjure to our minds some scene in one of his books which strikes us as more powerful and

more imaginative than the rest. There is a scene in *The Master of Ballantrae* which, powerful as it is, has never, I confess, been a favourite of mine, because the story is so utterly repulsive from the beginning to the end—the conflict of a scoundrel against a maniac narrated by a coward. But in *The Master of Ballantrae* there is a scene which we see before us as vividly as I see your faces now, where the old steward comes out with a silver candle in each hand glaring into the still and silent night, ushering the brothers to their death-struggle like a landlord handing out illustrious guests to their apartments. He walks through the night, and he holds the lights while they fight, and you next see the dead body, or seemingly dead body, of the elder lying with the wax candles flickering on each side in the silent night, and then again the steward returns, the body is gone, one wax candle has fallen down, the other is upright, still flickering over the blood-shed. Can you not all see it as you read it in the page of Stevenson? To me there seems nothing more vivid in all history. XVII.

Take another scene. You remember the defence of the little pavilion on the links, the old cowardly caitiff shrinking from the result of his crimes, the clinging daughter, the brave brute who defends and despises the criminal, the unwelcome guest who chronicles it, and in the midst of that strange story of defence you remember the little Italian hat that comes skimming across the scene—surely as vivid a touch as the footprint of *Robinson Crusoe*. Let me give you one more instance, and only one more. It is

XVII. in that masterpiece to applaud which old age and youth combine—I mean, of course, *Treasure Island.* In *Treasure Island* there are two walking-sticks—sticks that I think those who have read *Treasure Island* will never forget. There is the stick of the old blind man Pew that comes rapping, rapping through the darkness like the rattle of the snake, a sure indication of the coming curse, and there is the crutch of Long John, at once a weapon and a defence, which I think will live in our memory as long as any incident.

It is a folly, it is a presumption, to try and animadvert even on the works of this great genius in so cursory a manner, but the greatness of his genius is urged against any proposal to commemorate it at this moment. We are told by those who are always critics and always objectors—and nothing in this world was ever done by critics and objectors—we are told by them that, after all, the works of Robert Louis Stevenson are his best memorials. In one sense that is undoubtedly true. No man of ancient or modern times since the beginning of the world has ever left behind him so splendid a collection of his works as has Robert Louis Stevenson—I mean not merely of what they contain, but the outward and visible form of them. But this objection, if it is worth anything, means this—that testimonials are to be confined to those who have done nothing to make themselves remembered. I know very well that the age is marching at such a pace in this direction that it will be a source of pride soon to men, women, or children

to say that they have never received a testimonial. The minister as he enters and as he quits his manse is hallowed by such presents; the faithful railway porter who has been for five years at his post is honoured in the same way. No man who has lived a blameless life for ten or for twenty years can well avoid the shadow of this persecution. But, for all that, it is not for the sake of Robert Louis Stevenson that I would put up this memorial; it is for our own sakes. I do not, at any rate, wish to belong to a generation of which it shall be said that they had this consummate being living and dying among them and did not recognise his splendour and his merit. I, at any rate, do not wish that some Burns shall hereafter come, as in the case of Fergusson, and with his own scanty means put up the memorial that Fergusson's own generation was unwilling to raise. XVII.

XVIII

CECIL RHODES[1]

XVIII. It is not difficult for one who is, by an unfortunate accident in every sense, the senior Rhodes Trustee to say something—a very little—about the illustrious man who has done so much for Oxford and for the Empire.

The character in which most of us honoured Mr. Cecil Rhodes is that of Empire-builder and a great Imperialist statesman; and that is a character with which Oxford has always been accustomed to show itself in the fullest and warmest sympathy. From among many men of the highest scholarship you yet selected the Duke of Wellington as your chief, though, if I remember aright, he wore his cap the wrong way, and was guilty of more than one false quantity in his orations. You selected the Duke of Wellington, not because he was a great scholar, which he was not, but because, with his puissant arm, he had defended the liberties of the Empire, and perhaps of the world. And again, on a more recent occasion you wisely did honour to a statesman whose services to the Empire—a

[1] Speech at the unveiling of the Rhodes Memorial Tablet in the Examination Schools, Oxford, 1907.

gigantic part of the Empire—are too recent and too honourable for any one to overlook when you selected Lord Curzon as your Chancellor. And, great as those services may have been, you and I feel confident that he will illustrate his tenure of that high office as much in the future as in the past by rendering service not less illustrious and brilliant to the Empire as a whole than he rendered to the Empire of India. XVIII.

But it is not of Cecil Rhodes as Empire-builder that I want to say a few words to you to-day. I would rather remind you that he combined his motive idea of Empire with an abiding loyalty and affection to the University of Oxford. He speaks of it in his will as "my own University of Oxford," and it was a noble and original and inspiring idea which made him combine his Imperial aims with his affection for the University of Oxford. I see one or two of his friends around me who knew him as well or better than I did, and I think they will agree with me when I say that idea, that inspiration, cheered and animated the last years of Cecil Rhodes. It was to him a companion, a solace, and protection. I remember very well his once saying to me that it was his companion. He said, "When I find myself in uncongenial company, or when people are playing their games, or when I am alone in a railway carriage, I shut my eyes and think of my great idea. I turn it over in my mind and try to get a new light on it. It is the pleasantest companion that I have." Well, it was not merely a companion to him, it was a solace, and it was a protection.

XVIII. Let me explain what I mean. There was no man so slandered in his lifetime as Rhodes. He was represented as a mere bloodthirsty Shylock, a man, moreover, who would wade through any misdeeds in order to obtain money, great piles of money, which he might spend on his own luxury and comfort. Now there never was a greater lie than that. No man ever spent less on himself; his life was the life of a Spartan. It is quite true that he valued money, but that was because he valued power, and money was one of the most obvious and effectual means of obtaining power. Thus in a large way he sought for money as a means of present power, as a means of posthumous power, of carrying out his ambitions after his death. And so I remember, when people sympathised with him as to the way in which people who should have known better, who did know better, were throwing every sort of dirt at him as a low money-grabber and a disgrace to the name of Briton in South Africa, he said, "All this doesn't worry me the least. I have my will here"—as if he had it in his breast-pocket—"I have my will here, and when they abuse me I think of it, and I know they will read it after I am gone, and will do me justice when I am dead." Surely he was not wrong. When the hour came for him to go, many of his slanderers must have repented in tears and dust and ashes, while the whole world rendered a willing homage at his tomb.

I am not here to claim that Cecil Rhodes was perfect. No man is. He made great mistakes. No man knew it more quickly, or owned it more

readily, or censured himself more unsparingly, than he did. He made great mistakes. But I have heard one of the most eminent of that brilliant company of ambassadors that the United States have sent over to this country—I mean Mr. Phelps—in a speech at the Mansion House utter this great truth, that a man who never makes mistakes never makes anything. We know that Rhodes made one supreme mistake, but no man atoned for it more completely or repented it more fully. Again, I shall not attempt to disculpate him from the fault, if it be a fault, of high but not impersonal ambition. It was not impersonal, I admit, but in the main his ambition was entirely one for the British Empire, its good, and its greatness. His will, as we know, went far beyond the limits of the British Empire, but in his lifetime that was his aim. I dare say that he would not have weighed scruples very nicely if he had seen a clear path by which he could benefit the Empire directly. On that point I will not attempt to judge him, but I think we might remember that in the past century the three men who did most to change the map of Europe for the time—and he would have liked to, and did, change the map of Africa—the three men who most changed the map of Europe for the time were Napoleon, Bismarck, and Cavour, and of none can it be said they were overweighted with scrupulousness. XVIII.

But his fame was not impersonal. His ambition was not impersonal. I admit he had at one time a strong idea of posthumous fame. I remember arguing with him about it a long time

XVIII. ago. I used a stock argument. I said that fame was short, that in the case of all but a very few people there was no fame to speak of, and that even with them it did not last very long. I pointed to the millions of universes in the firmament, in each of which there may be millions of insects like ourselves, striving for the same brief and futile hour of fame. But Rhodes would have none of it. He said, "No, I don't agree with you at all. I have given my name to this great region of Rhodesia, and in two or three hundred years my name will still be there, and I shall be remembered. After two or three centuries what does it matter?" So that with him even then it was only a question of degree.

The last time I saw him, when the hand of death was upon him, and when sentence of death had already, I think, been pronounced to him, I found him in a very different mood. He said, "Well, after all, you are right. Everything in this world is too short. Life, and fame, and achievement, everything is too short," and he gave a groan as he thought of his own career and curtailed ambition. Perhaps he and I were both wrong. I think his fame will survive his own anticipations, and mine also. He has dug deep, he has dug broad, the foundations of his own reputation. In South Africa, that region of perplexity which will at any rate remain for all time a monument of British generosity, and I hope of British wisdom, the name of Rhodes will always be preserved, and in the British Empire, for which he worked with such sublimity of conception, such broad capacity, and such

unresting energy, he must long remain a figure and a force. XVIII.

But is it not after all in this University of Oxford that his fame is most secure? You are going to honour him to-day by setting up a tablet, superfluous at the present moment, but not superfluous in ages to come, which may recall to the most ordinary passer-by the benefit he sought to confer on this University. In your bidding prayers, in your ancient services, I suppose the name of Cecil John Rhodes will always be remembered. But will it not be chiefly renowned as having summoned from all parts of the world—from two great Empires, from the mightiest Republic that has ever existed—an affluence of new scholars ready to worship at the shrine of this ancient University, to imbibe its august traditions, and to take back to their homes and to their communities a message of peace, civilisation, and goodwill? I do not know what other methods may be taken to perpetuate the memory of Mr. Rhodes in this country or in South Africa, but sure I am of this, that in this ancient University his truest and noblest monument will be the career, the merits, and the reputation of the scholars whom he has summoned within these walls.

III

SCOTTISH HISTORY AND CHARACTER

XIX

SCOTTISH HISTORY

I[1]

What am I to say to you? That is a question which has constantly occurred to me. What is a young man to say to young men, unless he is more learned or more able than they are? He can give them neither advice nor experience; he has no right to be didactic, he can scarcely hope to be impressive.

And yet, if there ever was a conception which might lend inspiration to dullards, it would be the idea of addressing a body of men burning with the generous sympathies of youth, strong with the robust qualities, both mental and physical, of the Scottish race, standing under the shadow of an ancient University, upon the brink of that world in which they are so soon to plunge. They know some of the evils which beset life, yet they are not afraid to face them; they contemplate the future, not with distrust, but with confidence; they are prepared for the responsibilities of manhood and the citizenship of a great empire. Day by day the burden of that empire

[1] An Address delivered as Lord Rector to the Students of the University of Aberdeen, November 5, 1880.

XIX. waxes greater; day by day the responsibilities of manhood will become more onerous; day by day the future unveils itself before your eyes. And at this critical moment of your lives, I find myself chosen as your Rector, and set to address you; chosen, I believe, as being, like you, a young Scotsman, though much older than yourselves, from sympathy rather than respect, from a sense of kinship rather than a hope of guidance.

I have spoken of the greatness, of the increasing greatness of the empire. A share of that empire must devolve upon you; and I confess that it is in the spirit of that reflection that I consider with awe the assembly before me. The destinies of a nation are in the hands of its youth. How large a part of our destinies must lie in the hands of near seven hundred students, nurtured by the very fact of high culture in the proudest aspirations, gifted with that fervid spirit which is the distinction of our race, and endowed, I doubt not, as many of you are, with an intellect which is popularly supposed to possess some of the attributes of that granite soil on which you live. Do not mistake me. I do not mean that those before me are necessarily to sit in Parliament either in this country or in our colonies. The executive and legislative powers are only a part of the life of the nation. They both depend upon the character of the nation itself; and the nation must largely take that character from its educated class, of which you will form, I trust, a powerful element. Whether you enter the Church, or whether you practise in law or in medicine,—whether you undertake the functions of guiding

the mind of youth, or whether, without profession, you pass through life as honest and cultivated men, you, in virtue of the training you have received, must give a colour to the society in which you live. XIX.

I sometimes think, in relation to this question, that we are apt to forget what the functions of a University really are with regard to the nation. We hear a great deal of the various Faculties, of new Professorships, of the questions relating to scholarships and endowments; we have commissions, and we have reports. But there are vital points lying outside the compass of this radius of educational investigation, with which inquiry does not, and indeed cannot, deal. Are we not a little apt to disregard the camel in straining after the gnat, to consider culture and to forget character, to lose sight of the end in anxiety about the means? What, after all, is the object of University training, and indeed of all training? Is it not to produce a man,—a learned man, a cultivated man, a brilliant man, if you will; but, after all, and before all, a man, and an honest man?

Now, of course, a University can only partially effect this purpose. Rousseau would tell you that learning is itself the bane, and that a University is the worst place in the world to produce virtue. He tells you that erudition is the sign of decadence, and that lettered and cultivated nations have always succumbed to the rude heroism of barbarous tribes. Such a paradox is not worth considering. The Germans of this generation have completely demolished it, and I think the Scots

XIX. themselves form a very ugly problem to a philosopher holding such ideas. But in the doctrine, however extravagant it may seem, there is a germ of truth. Learning is by no means everything. By far the largest amount of training for manhood must be internal, must be undergone without help from teachers or from libraries. "In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often," in blood and iron is the destiny of man wrought out. "I was not swaddled, rocked, and dandled into a legislator," proudly exclaimed Burke; but is any one so swaddled and dandled? People may be rocked and dandled into insignificance, but they cannot be rocked and dandled into eminence. And this formation of character, this direction of energy, must be an internal process. I speak, of course, of secular means; for I would not casually introduce the religious aspect of the case into what I am going to say. It could not form merely a part, and therefore, rather than touch on it in a transitory manner, I deem it more reverent to omit it altogether.

But as regards the formation of character, the University is only an anxious, unconscious agent. She supplies rich and rare materials; not Solomon's temple was supplied in a more catholic and imperial spirit; but she can only sit by and watch whether the result be a shapeless block or the perfect figure of a noble man. You have before you now—you have within you, I would rather say—the clay and the marble, the chisel is in your hand, the dazzling models of antiquity are before you; every day

that leaves the marble untouched is lost, each day may add a masterstroke to a masterpiece; can you not, then, understand how solemn and suggestive a thing it is for the Rector of your choice to address you at such a moment—the crisis of your lives? XIX.

And it is no light matter, this choice of a Rector. It may not, indeed, be of such vital importance to yourselves as it was to your predecessors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The crowd of students from all parts of the world, who recognised neither country nor language in a University, but regarded it simply as one of a harmonious sisterhood of such institutions spread over Europe by the Church for the preservation and promotion of learning, no longer need a Rector to watch over their interests. The nations into which they grouped themselves indeed exist, but no longer include such varied races. Nor do you now require an official to protect you against ecclesiastical usurpation or baronial tyranny. In truth, the Rector, as regards his original functions, might perhaps have followed his colleagues, the Censor and Economus. But as a matter of fact, all University Commissions, however enlightened and however austere, have always respected and preserved the office of Rector, and, if I may say so, wisely respected and preserved it. For it is not only the means by which you connect yourselves with the government of the University, it is the means also by which you keep up your connection with the great world outside. From your ancient cloisters you look forth every three years and

XIX. select candidates, whose merits you sift and discuss, partly as persons with whom you sympathise or whom you admire in the abstract, and partly as persons who, from local or accidental circumstances, may be useful to your University. Sometimes, indeed, the contest is almost purely political, and reflects the passions that are raging outside; sometimes it is almost purely local, while sometimes it is neither; and we may arrive at the quaint spectacle of Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Bright in apparent opposition and rivalry. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge give no such opportunities to their students, unless the demonstrations in the theatres on honorary degree days may be deemed articulate expressions of opinion. But in Scotland we have Rectors, and I hope we shall continue to have them as an essential part of an ancient system, as a link between the students and the governing body, as a link between the University and the world.

And perhaps, then, as your representative in the University Court, I may touch upon what appears to me to be a striking defect in your University system. I have said that the University offers you the noble models of antiquity for imitation. But I venture to deem it a flagrant omission that she hardly puts before you at all the giant and immediate shapes of modern and mediaeval history. It is an omission from the threefold view in which the University may be regarded (for she wears, like the power which founded her, a triple crown); she is the custodian and repository of learning, she is the teacher of what can be taught, and she has that third

function of which I have spoken, which she can only partially and imperfectly fulfil, the formation of individual character. It is obvious, of course, that the partial omission at any rate of the study of modern history from the University in her capacity as a teacher and as a repository of learning, is a grave defect. I would, however, rather deal with it as regards the formation of individual character, which I have spoken of as the most important while it is the most indirect function of the University. XIX.

For what, after all, is history? It is not merely that history records the life of nations, and that the life of nations and of men is much the same—the dark infancy, the aspiring youth, the stern realisation of manhood, the fruition or barrenness of maturity, and perhaps also the decay of old age—but that it is the story of human effort, the treasure-house of human biography, and therefore of noble models and of splendid inspiration. When we peruse the life of a great man, it is common to find that his favourite reading was Plutarch's *Lives*, and yet from how small a range could Plutarch choose his subjects compared to that which history can now present before us! He only painted on a few inches of an immeasurable canvas, he only plucked a branch from a primeval forest.

Against history as a scientific study, or indeed as a recreation, something may well be said. "Read me anything but history," said Sir Robert Walpole, "for that must be false." And, indeed, it is doubtful if history can even remotely approach accuracy. We know every day of numberless

XIX. reports which circulate as true, and which remain uncontradicted, and which must of necessity remain uncontradicted, unless men would spend their lives in negation. There is no village too small to afford proofs that exact record is almost impossible, partly from the inherent carelessness of gossip, partly from deliberate falsification, partly from the unconscious colouring that an individual mind will give to meagre facts. While history, up to the sixteenth century, suffers from scarcity of evidence, the history of our own times will suffer much more from a suspicious amplitude of material; the years of plenty will be worse than the years of famine. And, taking this gloomy view, it would appear that to urge the claims of history, when we are unable to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion about personages so well known as Queen Elizabeth, or George III., or the first Napoleon, is a futile and, indeed, a sarcastic effort.

I speak, of course, of single-minded search after truth. I am not thinking of those ingenious writers who love to decorate some great criminal with padded virtues, and can, therefore, invest their narratives with all the charm of imagination and paradox. Nor, on the other hand, do I wish to allude to that other class, the body-snatchers of history, who dig up dead reputations for malignant dissection. But however earnestly it may be pursued, historical truth is difficult to secure. Like a wayward vein of precious metal, it sometimes abounds on the surface, and sometimes shifts in sands, and again will bury itself in the heart of the hills.

Take, for example, two prominent persons in Scottish history. You could hardly find two men whose names are more familiar to those who have learned their alphabet than Macbeth, the henpecked murderer, and Rizzio, the soft Italian victim of Scottish pride and Scottish jealousy. We know that Rizzio was slain, and, indeed, on payment of a small fee, you may see his blood on the floor. We believe him to have expiated in this way the dangerous fascination which he exercised over a beautiful woman. But we have no means of ascertaining his fascinations or even his age, and probability points to his having been extremely old as well as extremely ugly. XIX.

Macbeth, again, has been presented to us by Shakespeare as a turbulent and unscrupulous villain. It would not be possible now to paint over what has been portrayed by supreme genius, but all our historians appear to agree in this, that the reign of Macbeth was a period of unexampled peace, prosperity, and justice. In fact, if we wished to hold up for singular admiration a Scottish monarch, it would be difficult to prefer any to the man whose hapless fate it has been to be handed down to splendid immortality as a great historical criminal.

But, indeed, admitting that history is inaccurate, it does not follow that it is useless for our purpose. I would go further, and say that for our purpose the accuracy of history does not signify. What we want is the bold colouring of character and the grand march of events. Whether Macbeth was really a scoundrel or not does not

XIX. matter. If he had descendants, it might be important to them to vindicate his memory. For us he points a moral and adorns a tale. We see the gradual march of guilt, the uneasy success following crime, and the tragedy of complete retribution. We want events to guide us and characters to warn us, but we do not require in events the exact detail of a Meissonier, nor do we insist on the proper costume being placed on the actor so long as he plays his part.

Well, then, in spite of the objection to history on the score of inaccuracy, I humbly conceive that a University is unable to perform its functions as regards the formation of character without a professorship of modern history. But there is an omission of part of modern history, which, strange to say, is worse than the omission of the whole. For I cannot help regarding it as a stain not merely on this University, but on all our Scottish Universities, that there is no provision for the teaching of Scottish history.[1] While history in general is valuable in the one sense in which I wish to attribute value to it on the present occasion, the history of our native country is not merely useful and interesting, but absolutely essential; and I confess that it seems to me the greatest of omissions that there is no provision for teaching it. We must not lay the fault on our founders; they were employed in making that history, and had no leisure to devote to narrative or research. There is no great fault, indeed, to be attributed to any one, for during

[1] A stain now happily removed through the benefactions of Sir William Fraser.

the last two centuries the Scots have had so much ground to make up, and have made up so much ground, that they can hardly be charged with sins of omission. Nor do I wish to be misunderstood. I think there should be a professorship of Scottish history in Scotland, but not as representing an essential school or faculty. I would rather have it like a professorship of Belles Lettres, which is, as it were, outside the academical course, but which provides lectures which all may well attend as a relaxation from that course; or like the Chair of Gaelic which is about to be founded at Edinburgh, and which represents a patriotic determination not to let that die out which is intimately connected with the life of the country. Mr. Froude, indeed, has eloquently sketched a more ambitious scheme—a scheme which would realise the most extended hopes. If it could be carried out it would renew and strengthen the connection between the youth and the traditions of Scotland. But I half fear lest there should not be space in the academical course for so complete a system. I suspect the history course at Oxford is followed by a more leisurely class than exists to any extent at the Scottish Universities. Still we can only bow to the authority of that great historical master, while I feel that if Mr. Froude's scheme could be adopted I should rejoice; but in default of that, if we could only achieve a less ambitious professorship I should be content. The great point is that there should be a commencement, and that we should not be liable to the reproach of producing highly educated Scotsmen who know all about

XIX.

XIX. the Ephors and nothing about the Lords of the Articles.

It is a truism to say that the knowledge of the history of one's native country is not merely an educational advantage, but a positive duty. We need not go so far as Buchanan or your first Principal Boëce, and evolve out of our inner consciousness eight centuries of imaginary reigns, with their proper kings and appropriate Dutch portraits in Holyrood, so that our records may be more complete and more ancient than those of our neighbours. But at the same time it does not seem desirable, to put it on the lowest grounds, that we should ignore what has occurred in former days, the long agony of the country's growth and establishment, and bound our historical survey with some date of modern politics, such as the Disruption or the first Reform Bill. The history of Scotland is not a cold register of dates and treaties; it stirs the blood like a trumpet; no stranger can read it without emotion. But when we reflect that those who battled and endured (for the history of Scotland during four centuries is little less than a long martyrdom) were bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, when we consider that our qualities and defects as a race are the direct result of those circumstances, when we know that the country which has charms to attract the whole civilised world is but an empty scene to those who cannot people it from the past, when we observe how history is liable to repeat itself, and that, in dealing with Scotsmen, we must expect them to be made in the same mould as their predecessors, it seems one of those

mistakes which are worse than crimes for a native of Scotland to ignore the history of his country. XIX.

And, indeed, if we were not natives of Scotland, we should still be hardly justified in neglecting its history. It is, in the first place, rich in bold personalities; and, in the second place, it has certain special features which must attract the historical student, however versed he may be in the annals of other countries. And, as it is my anxious wish to attract your notice to the history of Scotland, let me, as briefly as may be, call your attention to one or two of these singularities.

Take for example this peculiarity, that Scotland, while she had a history, developed a striking character, but no material prosperity, but from the moment she ceased to have a history, she developed a material prosperity so marvellous as completely to obliterate her national character. Until the union of the Crowns the Scots nation were only known as a turbulent race of hardy heroes—poor, indeed, but poor because they preferred poverty to dependence, and were willing to sacrifice their castles and their crops to prevent the invader having a home or subsistence on Scottish soil. All this is now forgotten. The qualities still exist, none can doubt it, just as the faculties for industry and economy existed when there was no opportunity for their exercise. But the ancient reputation has been overlaid for two centuries with the reproach of avarice and the stigma of self-seeking. And why is this? Because from the time of the corporate union, when, thank God, she ceased to have a history,

XIX. this little rugged country made an advance in prosperity resembling the progress of some state in Western America, with free institutions planted on a virgin soil. Nor is this difficult of explanation. The very policy of Scotland required for the defence of the kingdom that its most fertile portion should be a desert incapable of yielding food to the invader. We hear much of the heroism of the Russians in burning Moscow. What then are we to say of the Scots? Why, for two centuries Scotland furnished a succession of burning Moscows. What is now the garden of Scotland—nay, I might add, the garden of the United Kingdom—was given up to devastation in order that the race might preserve its liberties and assert its independence. There is no nobler fact in any history. It was as if Italy had made Lombardy a desert in order to starve out the incursions of the northern nations. It was the sole chance that existed for the preservation of that freedom which was dearer to Scotland than all the wealth that the world could offer. It was not that the Scots did not appreciate the satisfaction of opulence. It has been a stereotyped sneer against them for two centuries that they care for little else. But it was because they cared for freedom more, and that freedom, weighed in the scales, counterbalanced every other consideration.

When their independence and liberties were secured, when by the removal of their Sovereign to London they might hope to enjoy that civil and ecclesiastical freedom which was always in peril so long as they received the individual

attention of Mary Stuart and her descendants, they settled down to repair the ravages of long centuries of agitation. It appeared then as if the tranquillity which they enjoyed after the commencement of the eighteenth century they were to enjoy on the opening of the seventeenth, and more than thirty years did, indeed, pass without serious disturbance. But at the first whisper of oppression, at the first raising of the mailed hand, at the first revelation of a plot against the security of what they had bled to secure, they did not weigh for a moment the quiet and well-being they had earned against the sanctity of that Kirk which was the breath of their nostrils. And when the King drew the sword, they without hesitation drew the sword also. Nor was it merely the people of Scotland that rose in arms. From every region of Europe the Scots who had passed into foreign armies, from restlessness, or poverty, or ambition, flocked homewards to place their valour and experience at the service of their country. Scotsmen who had taken service with Mansfeldt and had fought for the Winter Queen, trained pikemen from Holland and from Denmark, veterans who could show scars as others show medals won under the Lion of the North, all rallied under a banner nearer and dearer than any they had known. Scotland took the initiative and indicated the remedy to England. She began the great contest between the people and the Crown which changed the conditions of monarchy and deprived the King of his life. She, with her poverty-stricken half-million, showed the path to a wealthy population

XIX.

XIX. ten times as numerous. Surely the history of a people, so bold, so disinterested, and so united, is not without instruction to the outside world.

Again, the history of Scotland presents this original phenomenon, that the prevailing, constant, inextinguishable passion of the people was for liberty and independence, and that this was shown in an extraordinary attachment to monarchy. And this was no paradox. To them the monarch was only a sign of independence, like the lost Stone of Destiny. We see this by the constant efforts to obtain the custody of his person, and at the same time by his total want of authority. Where the King was, there the Government would be; hence the constant kidnapping of the Sovereign. But the King was to be only the symbol and not the possessor of power; he had but the attributes of a living Great Seal. So that in fact the same passion for independence which made them insist on having a King for external purposes, made them reduce him to a nullity within his dominions. He was to be a cheap pageant, decorating rather than controlling the march of events—much less than a constitutional sovereign, little more than a Venetian Doge.

Again, when the crimes of Mary Stuart and the defects and departure of her grotesque son had robbed royalty of interest even as a symbol, we see all the love of independence and craving for some outward sign of it find its sign and centre in the Reformed Kirk. The ancient Roman establishment in Scotland seems never to have had much hold upon the nation. Its

energy in the collection of property, real and personal, attracted other feelings than sympathy. Its prelates were a luxurious and, if they be not much maligned, a dissolute class. They were, moreover, aliens in training, and their education abroad left them little in common with their fellow-countrymen at home. When the virtuous part of the nation was scandalised at their corruption, and the worldlings were irritated by their pride and covetous of their power, it was not difficult to effect their overthrow. XIX.

Let us in passing be just. Before that proud Church was hurled down in Scotland, she left a supreme gift, nobler than the abbeys she had reared and the wealth she had accumulated. In the fifteenth century, as if conscious that she was about to pass away from us, and as if anxious to leave behind her the memory of a benefaction for which her name should be, if not blessed, at least forgiven, she determined to throw open to the people at large the treasures of learning that she had preserved : she gave us the Universities. Founded in a catholic spirit, framed on liberal principles, open freely and ungrudgingly to all that thirsted for knowledge, these Universities—and not the least our *Alma Mater* who gathers us together in Aberdeen to-day—give the ancient Church of Scotland a valid claim on our gratitude.

But whatever were her claims, she received no thanks in those days. She was the Church of the nobles ; the Church that was to succeed her was to be the Church of the people. The Reformers were no respecters of persons. Good Maister Jhone—as Knox is quaintly called—saw

XIX. in his sovereign only an eminent and heinous sinner. His successor saw in James the Sixth only a suitable object for interminable exhortation and reproof. It is not too much to say that at the end of the sixteenth century the parish ministers of Edinburgh had more power than the King in Scotland. Whether this be so or not, they represented the national feelings and embodied the national aspirations. The King had gone south—so much the better for him—the King had become a name. The Kirk abided with them—so much the better for them—and remained a reality.

The crimes of Mary Stuart coinciding with the Reformation in point of date, it was easy, putting spiritual considerations aside, to transfer whatever loyalty existed from the monarchy to the Kirk. The loyalty of Scotland to the Stuarts seems to have disappeared then and there. When the wretched Queen returned to Edinburgh after Carberry, she must have heard in the yells of the avenging crowd, she must have seen in the painted banners which recalled her crime, that the feeling which hailed her birth even amid the gloom of national disaster had vanished, and that while she had sealed her own destruction she had also dealt a fatal blow at the monarchy she represented. The Scots, indeed, took up arms for Charles II., but he was only to them a symbol of independence; there was between him and them neither liking nor respect. And as for the rebellions on behalf of his unhappy nephew and grand-nephew, it seems perfectly clear that these were planned and carried out entirely by the

Highland chiefs, for motives which were not shared in by the great mass of the nation. XIX.

Again, in most old states we have to deal with four factors—a monarchy, a church, an aristocracy, and the people. Surely the history of Scotland presents these four elements in a striking light. The King of Scots, without power or money or an army, was at once the most envied and the least enviable of monarchs, asserting his imperial independence abroad, and persecuted by his subjects at home; the Church, lax and splendid, toppling over from the mere weight and canker of corruption, and giving way to a far more stringent form of ecclesiastical government, which, in spite of its austerity, was adored by the people; the aristocracy, fierce, poor, and proud, which, by dissension, after the manner of the Kilkenny cats, had so weakened itself that at the time of the Union it had fallen, if not into contempt, at any rate into impotence; and, slumbering beneath all, the nation, revealing itself only now and then in wild Edinburgh mobs or in stern west-country Whigamore raids, reserving itself, as it were, for its moment of power and supremacy. These surely are strange elements out of which to develop a successful nation. But I have no time to dwell on that: my contention is merely that these are elements which at any rate deserve attention, not merely from the historian or even from a Scotsman, but from the student of human nature and human progress.

I have incidentally touched on the King and the Church. Let me explain in a very few

XIX. sentences what I would say of the aristocracy and the people. The turbulence of the aristocracy, whose very repose was only a sort of ground-swell, was probably caused by poverty and the ease by which, under a system of constant forfeitures, large estates could be acquired by successful agitation. The estates so quickly acquired were not the less rapidly forfeited, it is true; but the losses of the gambler never prevent his seeking perpetual windfalls. And it was not until the great galleon of the Church lay helpless amid these active privateers, and the acquisitions from an adversary so disabled assumed a semblance of security, that the nobles were content to settle down in peace upon their lands. As soon as dissension ceased, their influence terminated; for they required troubled waters to fish in. With a very few exceptions, such as the Huntlys, the Hamiltons, and the Argylls, the nobles in the seventeenth century exercised influence only as the representatives or instruments of the Anglicised sovereign. Before the Union, if tradition lie not, at the end of each session, when privilege ceased, the Canongate Jail of Edinburgh was wont to be crowded with Scots peers. At that period, the influence of the Duke of Hamilton, clouded and weakened by inherited irresolution, is the only independent aristocratic influence that we can trace; for the extravagant outburst of Belhaven was but the scarcely coherent expression, not of the feelings of the nobles, but of the passions of the populace. It may, therefore, fairly be said that at that time the nobles of Scotland had fallen into impotence; and, so far

as leadership may be associated with the idea of the aristocracy, their place was taken by the Kirk. But where, meantime, was the people ? XIX.

There is nothing to my mind so extraordinary, in view of their energy and intelligence, as the obscurity in which the Commons of Scotland prepared themselves for the power they now enjoy. Now and then a sudden, silent, fierce outbreak betrayed the strength that was slumbering ; such were the mobs which lynched Porteous, and insisted on the hanging of the captain of the *Worcester*. Indeed, the first appearance in history of the democracy of Scotland was, as we have seen, when, after the surrender of Carberry, the captive Queen was greeted on her return to Edinburgh by the insults and execrations of a vast multitude bearing the ghastly effigy of her murdered husband. On that day the people first came forth to show that the robe of majesty should not shelter a great criminal ; and it was surely a notable birth of public feeling. But it is strange that these strong, nay, ferocious instincts of justice and injustice should so seldom have flamed up, and that, while men sprung from the ranks of the people were obtaining education and distinction all over the Continent, the great mass should have preserved so stern a silence. From the surrender of Carberry to the time of the first Reform Bill the genuine forcible expressions of public sentiment can be counted on the fingers, and yet these were sufficient to show that public feeling and public opinion were always in vigilant existence. We have, of course, in France an instance of a similar silent flood

XIX. suddenly overflowing its banks at the Revolution, but it may fairly be urged that education among the masses in France, as compared with Scotland, did not exist. In Scotland we see an energetic and intelligent population, ruled by a remote Government and a Parliament in which they were not represented, patiently tilling the soil and sending their children to the parish school till such a time as they should be strong enough to demand a share in the control of their country's destiny. Such a spectacle, in these times of agitation and public meetings, is surely not without instruction; it is at any rate an original and perhaps a unique manifestation.

I have touched on only a few of the distinctive features of Scottish history; and, indeed, the limits of discourse will hardly permit of more. But to those who study men more than events, our country's annals present no less attractions. The romance of history, indeed, is divided between two very different Queens of France—Marie Antoinette and Mary Queen of Scots; and but a little way behind follows Charles Edward Stuart. Again, the history of revolutions is ever the most interesting, because it is always inseparably connected with some great man. The English had its Cromwell, the French its Napoleon, and the Scottish its Knox. The student of human character will surely pause over the rugged features of Knox, "who never feared the face of man." He will lament the melancholy destiny that robbed Scotland at a singular crisis of Murray's precocious statesmanship. He will contemplate, not without admiration, the greatest

and most sagacious of Scottish Kings, James the First, the Alfred of his country. He will be unable to view, without a sense of personal affection, the character of James the Fifth, the Scottish Henry the Fourth. There will pass before him the Bothwell of strange vicissitudes; and Carstairs, perhaps the greatest man that Scotland has produced outside literature; the sinister Morton, and the subtle Argylls; the Wallace and the Bruce, who are not sufficiently veiled in legend to be secluded from human sympathy and admiration; the learned Melville and the saintly Rutherford. XIX.

Other names might be cited, but perhaps these will suffice; and indeed it is time that I should end. But let me point out one more inducement to the study I advocate. You are in the city perhaps most calculated to give an interest to the study of those times, for surely no place ever suffered so much for its prominence. From the time that the Covenanting Commissioners refused to drink the cup of *Bon Accord*, and were followed by Montrose with an army which slaughtered the dogs which had been made the innocent instruments of satire, this unhappy city was compelled to undergo as many outward changes of compliance as the Vicar of Bray or Bobbing John of Mar. Indeed, Aberdeen was so often visited by Montrose, and in such various characters, that the authorities must have found it difficult to ascertain in what capacity they were to receive him. In those days the greatest seat of learning in Scotland, it was the fate of Aberdeen, as of Leipsic, to learn that a famous and hospitable

XIX. University is no protection against siege or outrage. Your well-sacked city, surviving the successive onslaughts of Malignants and Covenanters and impartial Highlanders, remains a noble monument of the stirring and perilous past of our country.

But I do not wish to weary, but to attract you, if possible, to the close study of Scottish history. I have thought that by so doing I could, without presumption or didactic affectation, best fulfil the duty imposed upon me. You are the best judges how far such a pursuit would suit your manifold dispositions. Around you learning spreads her various wares; you have but to pick and choose. You are the generation that holds for the present the succession to the long roll of famous men who have adorned this University. They have handed to you the light; it is for you to transmit it. The vestal lamp of knowledge may flicker, but it never dies; even in the darkest hours of dormant civilisation, it found loving hands to cherish and to tend it. To you that lamp has been given by those who have watched over it in these ancient colleges. I hope and believe it will not wax duller in your hands, but rather that you will show forth its radiance in whatever part of the world you may be called upon to wield that influence which every educated man must exercise.

And how solemn a moment is that passing forth from the cloisters of learning into the great Vanity Fair of the world, there to make, for good or for evil, the choice of Hercules and abide by the result. Even I may, without presumption, indicate to you the crucial

importance of that crisis of your lives, when it lies with you to decide whether your career shall be a heritage of woe or a fruitful blessing and an honoured memory. Day by day, the horizon of human possibility, which now lies so unbounded before you, must contract; the time must come when, under the stroke of illness or the decay of nature, hope, and health, the pride and power of life and intellect, which now seem so inseparable from your triumphant youth, will have passed away. There will then be no surer consolation, humanly speaking, than the consciousness of honest hope fulfilled, of health not abused, of life and intellect exerted in all its strength and fulness, not like water poured upon the sand, but for the raising and bettering in some degree of some portion of your fellow-men. I would fain hope that this living mass of generous youth before me was animated by no less a hope, by no lower an inspiration, and that in coming years it will be my pride and privilege to hear of some of you at any rate receiving the merited praises of grateful mankind. And if I might address your venerable University, which has conferred so gracious and so undeserved an honour upon me, I would say, in the words with which the Psalmist hailed the sacred city, "They shall prosper that love thee"; that love thee aright, that love thee not merely as an end, but also as a means, as the blessed link with splendid traditions and with noble men, as the faithful guide and the unfailing friend.

II [1]

XIX. WILL you forgive me if I say one or two words on the general scope and work of our society? In doing so, I am reminded of the speech by the late genial Sir George Harvey, the President of the Royal Scottish Academy, which I heard him make at one of the banquets of the Academy, which have, unfortunately, fallen into abeyance. Sir George Harvey was delighted with the exhibition, and he made a speech which amounted in brief to this: there never was such an Academy and there never were such pictures. Well, that is my view of our society. I shall express it quite frankly: there never were such publications. I very much doubt if any one can find any serious fault with anything that the society has done or with any publication that the society has put forward, and I venture to ask you of what other society known to you can so much be said?

What is it we have been privileged to do? What is the gap that we have been enabled to fill up? I think all our publications are valuable. But some epochs and some subjects appeal more especially to some than to others, and I think that we may say that on two subjects of great importance we have been enabled to do a good work—work which perhaps no other society could have done. Besides that, I flatter myself—but here I cannot carry my contention into the region of proof—that we have done much more than simply instruct by our publications. We

[1] Presidential Address to the Annual Meeting of the Scottish History Society in Edinburgh, November 23, 1897.

have done something in the way of inspiration to writers, and of inducing many to tread the field of Scottish history who might not have been so attracted except by our publications. I will take one book, the author of which is personally unknown to me, and which I have read and which I dare say you have read with the greatest admiration and delight — *The Byeways of Scottish History*, by Mr. Henry Colville of Glasgow. I cannot say for certain—for I have absolutely no knowledge on the point—that that book has derived any inspiration from our work, but I like to think that it has. XIX.

What, then, are the two subjects on which I think it has been the privilege of this society to do the most important work? The first is the history of the Stuart family after the abdication of James II., and that is a period of history which is still open to the historian. The history of the Stuarts after the abdication of James II., in spite of the invaluable material that exists both at Windsor and elsewhere, and in spite of the very valuable monographs on the various rebellions which they inspire, remains yet, I think, to be properly put in shape. Now, we have done a good deal in that way. I myself have been privileged to co-operate by the publication of some lists of those who took part in the rebellion of '45. I do not mention that fact as an encouragement to others, but I mention it because of the warning it gave to me, which will last me as long as my life. In a preface to that book I put in an extract, which I duly copied from a veracious authority, but when I was

XIX. challenged as to my authority I have never been able to put my hand on it from that day to this or to find the pamphlet from which I extracted it. Therefore, it is only one more confirmation of the invaluable advice given by an aged sage to one who sought his guidance in life, "Always wind up your watch at night, and verify your quotations."

But I also like to think that, if I have not been able to do very much myself, I made a suggestion at the last meeting I was able to attend which bore instant fruit. I do not believe the result was due to my suggestion—I am not so vain as to think so—but I am happy to think that two minds came together and the result was that the suggestion I made—that we might have an itinerary of the wanderings of Charles Edward after the battle of Culloden—has borne fruit, and has been admirably carried out by Mr. Blaikie in a volume which is now published. Now, let me make another suggestion, which I hope will be equally fruitful. Before the history of the Stuarts can be written there is a book which must be compiled and will not be easily compiled. I suppose you all know Haydn's *Book of Dignities*, which has been continued in a later edition by a Mr. Ockerby, and published by Messrs. Allen and Sons. It contains all the prominent honours and dignities and Ministries which have been conferred or created by the Monarchy during the whole period of our history. But what is wanted is a book of those dignities which were conferred by the Stuarts after their departure from England in

1689. During almost all that time they had their Secretaryships of State, and their peerages, their knighthoods, and their various dignities, and a list of that kind would be a most valuable assistance to an historian of the Stuarts. I quite admit that the first edition might not be a very complete book, because I say there would be some difficulty in the compilation, but the first edition would bring out so many suggestions and put the editor on the track of so many papers that the second and the third and fourth editions would be works of incalculable value to historians. XIX.

Now I dare say you might say, What is the use of any such book? The dignities died with the people, and they were not of much interest when they existed. But that is not the fact. Historians, with all respect be it said, are not sufficiently careful in matters of detail. They do not give us the actual date of resignations of power and accessions to power, and in the majority of histories, if anybody wishes to read them accurately, they have to read them with some sort of calendar of dignities with the exact dates by their side and with the book which I suggest. There is also this to be said, that whereas dignities and Ministries are, perhaps, of ephemeral interest when conferred by dynasties that are actually existing, there is an element of sympathetic pathos about them when they represent nothing but a faded, an abdicated, and a banished power. I am not sure that the whole calendar of the melancholy Court of the Stuarts, their shadowy Secretaries of State, and their purely nominal dignities would not have a greater interest both

XIX. for the historian and the student of human nature than that book of Haydn's to which I have referred, which tells you of those who enjoyed power and substantial rank.

I pass from that subject—the history of the Stuarts—where, I am sure, we have laid a sure foundation for the future historian, and I come to another subject of which a history has also to be written, and where, I think, we shall some day be recognised as having done an incalculably good work—I mean the history of Scotland in the eighteenth century. The history of Scotland in the eighteenth century has, I think, by all avowal, never been written. You have had the history of the two or three rebellions that were stirred up by the Stuarts or by their agents. You have had copious histories of the Union. You have had the history of the Porteous mob told in great detail and by a great master of fiction as well. You have had the Darien scheme told in great detail. Wherever the history of Scotland in the eighteenth century has touched politics it has been told, but the history of Scotland in the eighteenth century only in a very rare and indirect degree did touch politics at all. After the Union, I think we may say that Scotland determined to take, with the disability of the loss of her separate government, the full advantage of it. She gave herself up to fitting herself for the great part that she was destined to play in the government of the British Empire. She recovered by a long period of repose the exhaustion of the political part of her history, which was all excitement and which was no repose; and as

the affluent forces of nature gather themselves together under the uniform and impassive covering of the snow, so under the apparent deadness and moderatism of the eighteenth century Scotland was collecting her strength for the effort which she has put forward in the nineteenth. But there is even more to be said than this. She gained not merely by her reserve and recuperation of strength in the eighteenth century, but by the removal of the Court and of the Parliament and of the fashion of Scotland to the southern metropolis, she was enabled to develop in her rural districts types of independent character which I am sorry to say, under the influence of the more successful nineteenth century, with its railways and its hurry and its newspapers, are rapidly disappearing, and which it will be the privilege of the historian of the eighteenth century carefully to recall. XIX.

I have been much longer than I intended to be, but I was anxious to call attention to the two fields in which I think we have done specially valuable work, and which, I think, may encourage the historian of the future. I think the historian of the eighteenth century will not be able, perhaps, to confine his researches to that century. He will have to carry it on to the first quarter of the nineteenth, for the period of which I speak hardly ceased till the Ministry of Mr. Canning, and, indeed, some of us have been able to see in our lifetime survivals of these rare types of lairds and of divines, and of the servants of divines, which are specially racy and characteristic of the Scottish nation and of Scottish soil. As long

XIX. as we do this good work I wish more power to our arm; in fact, as long as the Scottish History Society exists I look forward with a certain confidence to the future. Of the history of the present we know nothing whatever. In despite of the invaluable agencies which report to us almost every event as soon as it occurs, we can only learn partially and imperfectly the real story of our times. What we get from day to day is, as it were, a kodak view, limited, narrow, and piercing, but so limited that for the purpose of history it is of little value. It will be a century hence before the large and serene gaze of history can focus itself sufficiently on the events of the day to be able to place them in their true relation and their true proportion, and I trust and firmly believe that a hundred years hence the Scottish History Society will be still active and vigorous, and perhaps pointing its focus towards the somewhat distracting and distorted events of the age in which we live.

XX

THE UNION OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND[1]

The first question I ask myself to-night, on finding myself in a place so novel, and before an audience so distinguished, is—Why am I here at all? It has long been the custom of this excellent Institution to inaugurate its annual session with a few words from some venerable or distinguished personage, which may serve to lend spirit and attraction to the commencement of its labours. My words, however, this evening can derive colour and interest neither from the weight of experience nor the lustre of reputation. I come here as a young man among elders, and a pupil among teachers. I speak only as a citizen among citizens, all sincerely solicitous for the prosperity of the city which we inhabit or adjoin. We are met here to-night that we may do something in our generation to keep alive in this famous home of letters the sacred flame which former generations kindled and sustained; which was fed in the last century by scores of men whose names will last as long as fame exists—

[1] An address delivered at the opening of the Session of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, 1871.

xx. too many, indeed, to enumerate if they were not, besides, familiar to us. I can only regret that on one of these occasions I should appear in some sort to be the officiating priest, yet I would rather have it so than not be present at all. Moreover, I cherish a consolatory thought—one that none of your previous lecturers can have experienced—which is, that being entirely unknown by any sort of reputation, nothing meritorious here or elsewhere can justly be expected of me.

We are met, then, here to-night to inaugurate a series of intellectual meetings in one of the greatest intellectual centres of the world; and in following out this line of thought, it first occurs to ask how this city, known for centuries as the uncouth and rugged home of an almost savage poverty, should have come to be considered such a centre. To answer that question, in some sort of way, is my object to-night. For the indirect cause of this phenomenon was undoubtedly the Act of Union between England and Scotland. And although the story of the Union is at least a twice-told tale, it is so important to us as Scots, so important to us as Britons, and so important to us as students of history, that perhaps you will forgive me if I enter upon the subject again. I had indeed presumptuously hoped to have been able to give, in some sort at least, a narrative of the treaty, but I found that the task would be far too long for one evening. Considering, then, that my task to-night was that of a lecturer, and not an essayist or historian, I thought the wisest plan I could pursue was to present before you the two or three incidents and

the two or three men who light up the somewhat monotonous history of the Union. xx.

Well, then, we must first try and put ourselves into the position of a Scotsman of the middle class at the time of the Union. His one predominant feeling was hatred of England and the English. He had had a share or two in the Darien Company, which had failed, he considered, because of the persecution of England. He had seen James Duke of York turn the Privy Council Chamber of Scotland into a dissecting-room. He had seen a form of ecclesiastical government, alien and hateful to him, imposed on his country. He saw that country poor and pining, and he saw that his Government could do nothing till the courier arrived from London. No Sicilian under Verres considered himself more neglected and oppressed by the dominant State than did this Scotsman. Then how, we may ask, was the Union brought about at all? The answer is an historical paradox. For the causes which led to the Union were all those circumstances which seemed to render a union impossible, or rather their reaction. The impatience with which the Scots saw their Ministers and Parliament guided from London; the blind fury excited in Scotland by the English opposition to the Darien scheme—a fury which showed itself in the judicial murder of Green and his companions; the Act of Security, which would practically have severed every thread of connection on the death of Anne—these causes, which certainly seemed likely to give rise to every result but a union, nevertheless brought the Union about.

xx. And the immediate cause of the passing of the Union is at least equally paradoxical; for it was owing to the opposition to it being led by the Duke of Hamilton—then certainly the foremost man in Scotland—that the success of the measure is due.

The scheme had always been dear to the heart of every English statesman; Cromwell, William, and Somers had all passionately desired it. But the ill-blood and the want of common sympathies or interests on either side of the Border had hitherto made it impossible. Events, however, had latterly proved that there must be a Union or war, that the two countries must be henceforth either the bitterest of enemies or entirely identical. And what did the enmity of Scotland mean to an Englishman, and of Englishmen most of all to a Whig? It meant a large army in the north, a large standing army, of which the dread among statesmen had not yet subsided; it meant a firm foothold and a safe lair for the Pretender and his followers; it meant a sword always ready for France to sharpen or to wield; it meant, in fine, that Scotland and England as separate States in those days could not be co-existent. It was under this impression that the English Ministry acted. They allowed the breach to become wider; they would not let the wound heal partially and imperfectly. It should be there, open and yawning, to show how much worse it would become if it were not tended. They gave the Queen's consent to all those Acts which were passed in 1703 as insults and injuries to England, with the single exception of the Act

of Security, and even to that they assented in 1704. That Act excluded specially from the throne any future King of England unless the Scottish demands should be first satisfied, and ordered "every fencible man" in the kingdom to be armed and drilled for its defence. The passing of that Act shows to what a pitch things had come, and how utterly impossible it was that they should go on as they were. Scotland was to be a nation of soldiers, with some Pretender as their King; a refuge and an encouragement for traitors and malcontents at home, and for open enemies abroad. England was to have on her northern frontier, in the neighbourhood of her great coal supplies, an enemy who would take every advantage of any reverse which her armies might experience on the Continent, and who would be able to do so with the greatest possible effect. Moreover, England could ill afford to her rivals and enemies abroad the spectacle of such a moral disaster as the existence of disunion and enmity in the heart of her little island State.

On August 28, 1704, three weeks after the passing of the Act of Security, the Parliament of Scotland was prorogued; on October 29 the Parliament of England assembled. It was perhaps as well that two months had intervened between the passing of the Act of Security and the meeting of the English Parliament. And though cabals were at first the order of the day, yet on the whole counsels of moderation prevailed. At the great debate of the Lords, indeed, the Queen was present, for the first time in her reign, "to take

xx. care," writes Roxburghe with some pathos, "of the ancient kingdom"—probably, however, rather to countenance Godolphin her ancient Treasurer. The English Parliament passed retaliatory measures against the trade of Scotland, to operate in a year in case the Scots had not by that time settled the succession to their Crown in conformity with that to the Crown of England. But at the same time, as if perceiving that only one chance of peace remained, they authorised the appointment of Commissioners to treat for a union.

While this was taking place in England, the judicial murder of Green had occurred in Scotland, which was sufficiently significant of the temper of the nation. An English merchant ship had anchored in the Forth. To a population of Darien shareholders smarting under disaster and bankruptcy, retaliation on the English was irresistible. They seized on the ship and the crew; and after barely the form of a trial, three of the sailors were summarily hanged.

Two months after this execution (June 28, 1705), the Scottish Estates reassembled; and as these Estates have passed for ever into the limbo of antiquaries, and as a knowledge of their constitution is essential to the student of the Union, it is worth while to recall for a moment what they were. They consisted of Peers, county members called Barons, and burgh members called Burgesses, all sitting in the same house. Their method of procedure seems to have been lengthy and perplexed. In one respect it resembled our House of Commons, as the members in speaking addressed the President or Speaker,

and began, "My Lord Chancellor." Another custom they had, primitive but respectable, which is worthy of consideration by any English statesman. Whenever a peerage was about to be conferred, the candidate was named in full sitting of Parliament, and the reasons for his promotion were stated. This method, which has everything but custom to recommend it, would, I fear, curtail considerably the peerage of this country; and the imagination runs riot in portraying the scene which would have taken place had the Lord Chancellor been obliged to read to the English Parliament the reasons for erecting Portsmouth or Kendal into duchies. Indeed there is every reason to think that the practice must have been abandoned in Scotland long before the Union. xx.

On the first day of the reassembly of a new Parliament the whole body of members rode from Holyrood to the Parliament House. The ancient crown, sword, and sceptre of Scotland were borne aloft by bare-headed nobles; the procession was glad with a crowd of heralds and pursuivants; last of all rode the King, or his representative. The burgesses wore cloaks, and were each attended by a footman; the county members also wore cloaks, but were attended by two footmen. The Peers made a far finer show. They wore their scarlet robes, and were attended each, according to his rank, by pages, train-bearers, and lacqueys. The higher the degree the greater were the number of retainers, until one arrived at the seventh heaven of Dukery. Each Duke was followed by eight footmen, and apparently an

xx. unlimited number of the other attendants. Although the taste for such pageants has gone by for ever, this one seems to have been unusually interesting and affecting, as presenting to the nation the simultaneous view of their King, their Parliament, and formerly also of their Hierarchy. Careful arrangements were made for the mounting and dismounting of the less agile senators; but the ride was imperative on all. It reminds one of the occasion when Shaftesbury, in 1672, to revenge himself on some old Judges, decreed the revival of the ancient cavalcade of the legal profession to Westminster Hall, when one at least of their lordships bit the dust.

When they reached their noble hall, they sat according to their ranks, with the Lord Chancellor in the chair. On ordinary occasions the sitting commenced nominally at ten o'clock; in reality probably much later. The appearance of candles, as creating a hopeless confusion, seems generally to have caused them to adjourn. Fletcher, in one of his speeches, gives an amusing account of the difficulties of legislation. "We meet," he says, "in this place in the afternoon, after a great dinner, which, I think, is not the time of doing business, and are in such confusion after the candles are lighted, that very often the debate of one single point cannot be finished, but must be put off to another day." That many of the members had dined heavily before they arrived is only too apparent from the records; for it was the most irascible assembly in the world, except perhaps the Polish Diet. Nor can we

forget that good Burgundy cost in Edinburgh at that time only 10d. a quart. xx.

Allow me to reproduce a few of the many parliamentary ebullitions which abound in Scottish contemporary records. For instance, on June 29, 1703, Lord Errol, High Constable, informed the House that at the last sitting a scuffle had taken place in the House between Lord Belhaven and Sir Alexander Ogilvie, and that he had put them under arrest. However, as always happened on these occasions, they were pardoned on giving in apologies couched in the exact formula of naughty children—that they were sorry for what they had done, and would not do the like again; a promise they kept faithfully till the next occasion on which their temper was tried. There is also an amusing entry of July 25, 1705, in Sir David Hume's diary: "Saltoun still insisting, Sir James Hacket said he was impertinent. Saltoun said, he that would call him impertinent was a rascal. The House being alarmed at such expressions, Sir J. Erskine moved 'both should be sent to prison.'" On another occasion Saltoun and the Duke of Hamilton quarrelled, and Fletcher said their reckoning was for another place. At last with great difficulty they were persuaded to be reconciled. At another meeting Fletcher seized Lord Stair by the scruff of his neck for some expression which offended him. Altogether, the entry in Sir David Hume's diary for January 8, 1707, is applicable to almost every sitting of the Scottish Parliament: "This day spent in jangling, and nothing done."

But the Assembly, though fiery, was not

xx. brilliant. It is curious, indeed, to notice the dearth of Scottish statesmen at the time of the Union—a poverty the more remarkable when we remember the mighty intellects that Scotland was producing half a century later. There was the pleasing and graceful Roxburghe, the headstrong Jacobite Atholl, and the treble traitor Annandale. There was Stair, able and eloquent indeed, but labouring under the weight of political infamy; and Queensberry, who suffered from at least the suspicion of political incapacity. Above these, again, there were three men, not, indeed, of equal merit or of equal ability; but here fortune and passion had made Hamilton and Belhaven as prominent and effective as Fletcher of Saltoun. It is impossible to understand the Union without understanding or endeavouring to understand these three men, more especially Hamilton.

The career of James, Duke of Hamilton, is so involved in intricacies and contradictions that it would at first appear difficult to come to any definite conclusion regarding him. In early life he distinguished himself as a Jacobite among Jacobites; he did not quit James till he had seen the unhappy King on board at Rochester; he was the last and the most ungracious who greeted William. Twice within a few years of the Revolution was he committed to the Tower for correspondence with the exiled family, and for plots in their favour; yet in 1694 he was selected for an extraordinary mark of royal favour, in being allowed on his mother's resignation to succeed to the Dukedom of Hamilton.

In the Union Parliament he headed a violent opposition to the proposed measure; his party trusted him blindly, and followed him without reserve. Yet on no occasion did they come to a pitched battle that their leader did not openly desert them. When the treaty came before the House, this eminent Jacobite would not dream of discussing it till the succession had been permanently settled on the Electress Sophia; yet there is little doubt that at that moment he was in correspondence with St. Germain. He was not named a Commissioner for the Union, as being utterly hostile to the measure; he was not elected a representative peer because he had completely betrayed its opponents. Having been for so long the leader of this bitter opposition to the Crown and its measures, he was then selected for the highest honours an English monarch can bestow. He was created an English Duke. The Order of the Garter was added to his Order of the Thistle, two distinctions which had never previously been united in the same person. He was immediately afterwards made Ambassador to Paris. And a few days after this again he was killed by a scoundrel in a quarrel about his mother-in-law's steward. xx.

Thackeray has presented this ambiguous personage before us as the accepted lover of Beatrix Esmond, in those last Garter-and-Thistle ambassadorial days. The career is one which may well be spared from history to be framed in fiction, for it derives but little lustre from facts. Hamilton, indeed, was at once passionate and irresolute, headstrong and timid. He was appar-

XX. ently constant in his youth, and his loyalty to James II. was the most sincere passion of his life. Later, again, he was disposed from his princely position to take the leading part in Scottish affairs. Nor do I think it improbable that occasionally there flitted before him the loftier vision of a crown. He made a royal entry into Scotland, where he found the ball at his feet. Nor did he hesitate in his choice of a party to lead. There was one then which embraced three-fourths of the Scottish nation, which represented its pride and its jealousies, and which was vehemently opposed to any connection with England more close than a federal union. At the head of this he placed himself. But occupying this prominent position, his mind was distracted by various and jarring considerations. He had great estates in England, which deterred him from risking all for Scotland; he had some standing and influence at Court, which deterred him from committing himself to the opposition; and he wished to conciliate even that minority which did not follow him, with a view perhaps to that crown which more than once has tempted his house. He wished to stand well with the Court of St. James's and the Court of St. Germain; he sought to lead Scotland and preserve his influence in England; he hoped, while leading a faction, to secure a national crown. Was ever man quartered by more violent steeds? And thus, while pleased with his tail of cheering shopboys, he was unable on any decisive occasion to nerve himself to a decided course. And yet, when Earl of Arran, he seems to have had the

courage to choose his part and adhere to it; the Dukedoms and Garters and Thistles seem but to have corrupted and unnerved him, as indeed they have relaxed stronger fibres than his. On this man, fortunately for the Union, the power had fallen of rejecting it. xx.

John Hamilton (Lord Belhaven) was a widely different character. He is often represented as a young and high-spirited peer, who, fresh from classic studies and kindled by a passionate resentment against the betrayers of his country, burst forth into an inspired eloquence in defending the liberties and independence of Scotland. The real man at the time of the Union was a high-minded but stubborn nobleman of fifty, suspected of avarice, and described by an eye-witness, prone, indeed, to exaggeration, "as a rough, fat, black, noisy man, more like a butcher than a lord." He had a great memory, which, as Rogers said of Lord Dudley's heart, he proved in getting his speeches by it. These speeches, preserved carefully at the time, were rather declamations addressed to the public outside the Parliament House than speeches directed to the Estates inside. In our own time such an orator would be coughed down in his fourth sentence; at the time of the Union his bombastic paragraphs were the watchwords of his country. That they were absurdly pedantic, that they were painfully prepared to the very least monosyllable, that the delivery no less than the style was intolerably affected, are hindrances perhaps to our pleasure in reading them, but formed no obstacle to their popularity in Scotland. They were admired,

xx. indeed, by later and austerer critics than the Edinburgh tradesmen of the time of the Union. To me, I confess, they savour sometimes of a schoolboy's theme, and sometimes of the Pogram defiance.

I will give an example of both styles. In his most famous speech, having recited the Roman punishment for a parricide, and the description of a Roman triumph, he proceeds: "If his Grace (the Duke of Queensberry, the Commissioner) succeed in this affair of a Union, and that it prove for the happiness and welfare of the nation, then he justly merits to have a statue of gold erected for himself; but if it shall tend to the entire destruction and abolition of our nation, and that we, the nation's trustees, shall go into it, then I must say that a whip and a bell, a cock, a viper, and an ape, are but too small punishments for any such bold unnatural undertaking and complaisance." The following paragraph I should call the Pogram style: "For my part, in the sight of God, and in the presence of this Honourable House, I heartily forgive every man; and beg that they may do the same to me. And I do most humbly propose that his Grace my Lord Commissioner may appoint an *Agap*, may order a love-feast for this most Honourable House, that we lay aside all self-designs; and that after our fasts and humiliations we may have a day of rejoicing and thankfulness, may eat our meat with gladness, and our bread with a mirry heart: then shall we sit each man under his own fig-tree, and the voice of the Turtle shall be heard in our land, a bird famous

for constancy and fidelity. My Lord, I shall make a pause here, and stop going on farther in my discourse till I see farther, if his Grace my Lord Commissioner received any humble proposals for removing misunderstanding among us and putting an end to our fatal divisions. Upon honour, I have no other design, and I am content to beg the favour upon my bended knees." Then there was a pause, but no recorded answer —the Commissioner, probably, not clearly understanding what an "agap" was. The scene must have been an extremely remarkable one: the Parliament House filled on a winter's evening with senators, somewhat torpid after the great meal of the day; on the throne the Commissioner gazing with blank astonishment at this portly and middle-aged man who, on his bended knees, was imploring him for an "agap," in order that the turtle-dove might once more be heard in the groves of Scotland. To a Commissioner without a fine sense of metaphor one can easily understand that the situation was puzzling; but before he could probably understand what was going on, Lord Belhaven was up and at him again. xx.

It is easy to laugh at these speeches now; they are not in harmony with the spirit of our times. But of their enormous success and popularity it is impossible to doubt. Nor was this feeling merely transitory. I have a copy, printed at Glasgow in 1780, seventy-four years after the delivery of the speech, seventy-three years after the measure it opposed had become law, and when the Union was as much an accomplished fact as the battle of Bannockburn. If, then,

xx. Belhaven caught the spirit of the age in which he lived, delighted the constituency whose sentiments he expressed, and if his speeches retained their popularity in Scotland long after results had falsified every word they contained, he needs no tribute that we can give him. Whether he was a great orator or no, his fame should be swallowed up in a nobler and a rarer title. He was a great patriot. During the time that James II. was pleased to act as the Alva of Scotland, Belhaven denounced the peril arising from a Papist successor to the crown in stronger words than had placed men in the thumbscrew and the boot. He largely contributed to the establishment of William on the throne of Scotland; he commanded a troop at Killiecrankie; the part he took in opposing the Union was single and sincere. His violent temper and his fantastic eloquence forbade of his acting with others. But in a day when political honour and political virtue seem to have been at, if possible, a lower ebb in Scotland than in England, it is a consolation to be able to dwell on two such characters as Belhaven and Fletcher.

For whatever his faults may have been, the honesty and patriotism of Andrew Fletcher were unquestionable. On the other hand, his temper was so impracticable, and his views so singular, that he passed his political life as a Parliamentary free-lance, and effected little direct good; but his presence in the Scottish Estates was of great value. He was one of the few Scotsmen of that age who had travelled on the Continent: a circumstance which gave him wider and more

independent ideas than his fellows, but which seems also to have had the effect of severing him in sympathy and interests from the great body of his countrymen. His first appearance in public life was when he spoke his mind against James Duke of York, then Viceroy of Scotland. For this he fled to Holland. Holland was then indeed the sole refuge of political virtue and religious liberty. He afterwards returned to England to take part in Lord Russell's conspiracy with his friend Baillie. When the plot was discovered, Fletcher escaped, while Baillie was seized and executed—for when offered his life on condition of betraying Fletcher he preferred to die. After two years spent in travel and political study, Fletcher joined the ill-fated expedition of Monmouth; but it had hardly landed before he had in some paltry quarrel killed the Mayor of Lynn. This obliged him to fly, and the incidents of his flight read like a chapter of Lever or Defoe. Leaving England he embarked in a vessel bound for Spain. On arriving there, however, he was at once thrown into prison on the application of the English Ambassador, and kept there till he could be sent to England. From this desperate condition he was released by a mysterious agency. Looking one day through the bars of his dungeon, he saw a "venerable person" making signs to him. By these signs he discovered an open door, through which and a guard of sleeping soldiers he passed in company with his deliverer. Who that deliverer was or whose agent Fletcher never knew. In disguise he now travelled through Spain, whence he finally escaped to serve as a

xx. volunteer in Hungary till the Revolution enabled him to return to Scotland. There he took a prominent part both in the debates of Parliament and the formation of the Darien Company. He ardently opposed the Union, as he believed it to be a death-blow to the freedom and independence of the country. In politics he voted with neither of the sides that bore a name in that day. He used to say that the names of Whig and Tory "were given and used to cloak the knaves on both sides." He belonged to a party rare in Scotland at that time, if indeed it was not limited to himself, but which Mr. Disraeli tells us governed Great Britain for nearly a century and a half; he was a Venetian Republican. He dreamed of Athens and of Rome; of a grateful country ruled by an intellectual oligarchy; of a State where all men should be entirely equal—but ruled entirely by the aristocracy. Of the people he seems to have thought but little; in any relation except as subjects not at all. He was an advocate for the ballot, not indeed as we advocate it now, as a protection for the constituencies against corruption and intimidation, but as a protection for the representatives against the constituencies and the Court. His temper was violent and his temperament irreconcilable; and though for these reasons he could never be supported by a party, his eloquence, nervous, argumentative, and classical, made him the foremost man in the Scottish Parliament.

The session of the year 1705 was short and stormy, but the advantage lay with the Court. It is not here necessary to describe the proceedings

of the Parliament. Only one sitting was of real but that was of paramount importance; and to that sitting, therefore, I will confine myself. The Sovereign was represented by John Duke of Argyll, and afterwards of Greenwich, not the least distinguished of his historic race. Measures were at once proposed in the spirit of the Act of Security to limit further the prerogative of the Sovereign. A Bill was passed, though not ratified, enacting that the Ministers and Judges of Scotland, after the death of Anne, should be elected by Parliament. So also it was agreed that a Scottish Ambassador should be present at the ratification of any treaty made by the King of the two countries—a curious solicitude, by the bye, compared with the anxiety of minor Powers in the present day to be rid altogether of their diplomatic representatives.

On the 1st of September there was that critical sitting, which was the Leipsic of Hamilton's party. It began by the Duke of Hamilton proposing a clause respecting the contemplated Union, which, by declaring that the Treaty should not touch the ancient liberties and rights of Scotland, was intended to prevent any but a federal connection. On this there was a hot and protracted debate, but finally the clause was rejected by two votes. The Duke of Atholl then moved that no Commissioner be allowed to treat with England on behalf of Scotland till the English Parliament had rescinded their recent Act directed against Scotland. This seems to have been agreed to; but the Court insisted that it should be the subject of a separate address to

xx. the Queen; which they carried, under protest from Atholl and a great number of members, including most of the Squadrone—a third party which sought to make itself valuable by holding the scales between the Government and the Opposition.

The sitting had now been unusually extended, and the Duke of Hamilton was said to have pledged himself that the method of appointing the Union Commissioners should not be discussed that evening. Whether that be so or not, or whether it was owing to the negligence, the impotence, or the absolute non-existence of the party "whips," it is impossible to say. At any rate, when the last vote was taken, there was a scramble to leave the House. To the speechless amazement and wrath of the remnant, the Duke of Hamilton, "the brave antelope" as he is termed in the squibs of the day, rose and proposed to leave the appointment of the Commissioners to the Queen. It may readily be conceived how the National party received this conduct on the part of their leader; for to them Anne was as much a prisoner in London as Mary was at Fotheringay. But, though desperate and bitter, their opposition was futile. The third party or Squadrone coalesced with the Court, and the motion was carried by a large majority. "From this day," says Lockhart, "may we date the commencement of Scotland's ruine."

Three weeks afterwards the Parliament adjourned. It can hardly be doubted, I think, that Hamilton's behaviour in the matter was due to a promise made by Argyll (which Argyll

was unable to keep) that he should be appointed a Commissioner; for Parliament would not have elected one who possessed an English estate. Anyway the occurrence is notable as being the first of the occasions on which he betrayed his party, and as being the real crisis of the Union. It seems to me that after that sitting the Union became a certainty. It strengthened the Court and disheartened the Opposition. By securing the appointment of favourable Commissioners it rendered a treaty certain, and the ratification could be secured by a creation of Peers; or, at any rate, a rapid and amicable settlement of the treaty would make subsequent opposition far more difficult.

It will not be necessary to trouble you with the Commissioners. Argyll had not been able to secure the nomination of Hamilton, and therefore declined to serve; the Squadrone was altogether omitted. Among the English, the most important names were those of Cowper the Lord Keeper, and Somers. Much, we may fairly surmise, of the success of the negotiations was due to their wisdom and tact. Nor will it be necessary to repeat to you those well-known negotiations and their well-known results further than to notice their brevity. On April 16, 1706, the Commissioners from both kingdoms met at Whitehall; on the 25th they had agreed that the kingdoms should be indivisibly one, with the same line of succession, which settled the crucial question of the Union being federal or corporate. In two months the Treaty was signed and sealed.

xx. The ratification was a very different matter. From the press of Scotland the announcement of the Union produced a shriek of real or simulated indignation. Piles of these dreary publications have been preserved, and some have a quaint character of their own. Two tracts, for instance, almost illegible in their blurred type, appeared in the Aberdonian dialect, which I confess I do not understand. The Aberdeen stocking-makers, or shank-workers, approved of the Union, for, as they said, "if ance the trade were opened by the Eenion, all the women in the quintray will flie upon the wool like so many ravens upon a dead carion"; and they feared that the opponents of the measure "man be very short-sighted or miveed by na guid spirit; we wish mony o' them be not watermen, that is to look ae gate and row another." But the Aberdeen fishermen were strongly opposed to what they called the "Onion," for this among other reasons: "put again tat excise is no less, yea a greater, burden to many, for it will make usquebae dear, which her nanesell cannot well went," though they acknowledge that "to pe plain her nanesell does not well forstand tese nise points." Then there is in most of these tracts a pervading countryman always in opposition to the Union, sometimes convincing what is called a "landwart schoolmaster" by assuring him on trustworthy figures that the Union of the Crowns had cost Scotland over 4220 millions sterling, sometimes falling an easy prey to the weighty words of a "coffeemaster," sometimes adjuring his landlord not to play "sic a tod's turn" as to vote

for the Union, as being a quarrel "with their awn mother, in hopes of getting a stapmother." Then there is a tract called the "Testamentary Duty of the Parliament," which points out how excellent an opportunity this is for useful legislation, and urges, curiously enough, the evils Scotland has suffered from that very Scottish Secretaryship of State which some among us have lately been trying to revive. Then there is a patriotic pamphleteer who compares himself to the dumb son of Croesus, whose tongue was loosed at the sight of his father tied to the stake. Then we have a lay sermon, attributed to Sir David Dalrymple, taking such a roseate view of the Union that it puts forward the emigration of the Scottish gentry to London as an advantage to Scotland, for the Scot goes there, he says, "to get an estate, not to spend one"—a remark which does equal credit to his casuistry and to his knowledge of the character of his countrymen. Then there is "The Smoaking Flax Unquenchable" which denounces every one impartially, and says, perhaps truly, of these Scottish gentry: "The practice of the nobilitie and gentrie, how odious is it, alace! the most and greatest part of them are so naked of morality, and such as are scarcely to be found in Turkie land among Pagans." Then there is the protest of the "United Societies of the witnessing remnant of the anti-Popish, anti-Prelatick, anti-Erastian, anti-Sectarian, true Presbyterian Church" against "this land-ruining, God-provoking, soul-destroying, and posterity-enslaving and ensnaring Union"; and scores of others which have

xx. unfortunately escaped the butterman and trunk-maker.

When the Estates began to consider the treaty, the excitement in Scotland was universal. The pamphleteers, like cuttlefish, had darkened the waters of controversy; mobs were everywhere assembling. A few inhabitants of Ayr alone petitioned Parliament in favour of the Union; there was hardly a place so remote or so insignificant that did not petition Parliament against it. The Duke of Hamilton as Keeper of the Palace, and the Duke of Queensberry as Commissioner, had each apartments in Holyrood. Thither they returned after the session of the House—Hamilton attended by a cheering crowd of apprentices, Queensberry in danger of his life. Twenty-four young rivals of Harmodius and Aristogeiton had, it was said, sworn to assassinate the tyrant. There was a riot in Edinburgh, in which Defoe's prolific head was nearly broken. There was a riot in Glasgow, in which the mob armed itself, performed a sort of Finchley march, and then returned home. That Cameronian remnant, which distinguished itself by so many negative epithets, hearing that Bishops were to legislate for them in the House of Lords, rose in arms in conjunction with the Jacobites. But as the leadership of this movement was divided between the Duke of Hamilton and an English spy, it is needless to say that it ended in smoke; and I confess I think that its importance has been much overrated. But that the country was bitterly hostile to the proposed measure is a fact beyond doubt. Fortunately for the Union,

plebiscites were not then in fashion, and it prospered. xx.

On the 4th of November the struggle began; and the sitting is worth notice as being the second crisis of the Union. Only one article was discussed, but the division was a trial of strength. Hamilton spoke, as his habit was, with spirit; he drew, we are told, tears from many of his hearers—nay, even from supporters of the Government, "particularly the Lord Torphichen." It was on this occasion that Belhaven delivered that address from which I have already quoted. He was profuse in classical allusions; he fell down on his knees to Queensberry, imploring him to ordain an "Agap or love-feast"; he paused again later in his speech "to drop," he said, "a tear as the prelude to so sad a story"; and the debate continued while the tear was dropped. He afterwards continued his speech. But a sense of the ridiculous had dawned upon his audience, and Lord Marchmont, with the applause of the House, only devoted a single sentence to his oration, though Roxburghe seems to have taken it more seriously. Seton of Pitmedden delivered a calm argumentative speech in favour of the treaty, which he afterwards published. The division was a triumph for the Government, as they had a majority of thirty-three, chiefly composed of their recently-created Peers, whose claims to that distinction had not, I think, as a rule been submitted to Parliament according to the good old custom. There was another skirmish ten days later, when Belhaven delivered another speech much toned down by the in-

xx. different reception of his first. But after this matters worked smoothly enough till the second week in January, when the twenty-second article came under discussion, and on that there arose the third and supreme crisis of the Union.

The country party and the Jacobites had organised a last and desperate effort to defeat the measure. When the article had been proposed, Hamilton was to rise and protest in the name of the people of Scotland against the proceedings of Parliament, to declare its unfitness to legislate on such a matter without consulting the constituencies, and then to secede publicly from the House followed by his friends. The watchword ran through Scotland, the country gentry and their retainers flocked in to escort in solemn procession the seceding senators, no exertion was spared to render the occasion memorable and splendid; finally, an appeal was to be made to the nation, and also without doubt to arms. On January 7, 1707, the streets of Edinburgh were disturbed by an unusual influx of neighbouring gentry and yeomen; every approach to the Parliament House was blocked; within, the radiant opposition hailed the coming crisis. The great and decisive blow was to be struck at last; they only waited for their leader; but he tarried. At last he was sent for. The messenger returned with the reply that the Duke of Hamilton had the toothache, and would be unable to attend the House that day—what, in fact, is termed in college slang an "aeger."

This was more than flesh and blood could stand. The principal conspirators hastened to

Holyrood, forced their way into the Duke's presence, and upbraided him for his conduct in unmeasured terms. At length Hamilton consented to come, and all promised well; but he had yet another death-blow to give. Sauntering into the lobby, he inquired casually who was going to make the protest. He was informed it was himself. Then, indeed, his Grace expressed his concern and surprise. He was devoted to the cause; he would be glad to support the declaration; it had his warmest wishes; but as to his taking the first part, it was impossible. Disheartened, stricken, and betrayed, the conspirators gradually dispersed. The debate indeed was hot, but the conclusion was foregone. Stair spoke with his usual eloquence and more than his usual ardour in favour of the article, retired home worn out, and died before the dawn. A death so patriotic might almost obliterate the murders of Glencoe. He died, however, like Moses, in sight of the land of promise; for a week afterwards, on January 16, 1707, the Union was passed, and in less than two months afterwards Anne in person had given the Royal Assent to the further ratification of it by the English Parliament. xx.

Such is the singularly uneventful history of the Union—distinguished by three crises and three men, remarkable for the ease and celerity with which, under the most unpromising circumstances, the measure was passed, but supremely interesting and remarkable in its results. Its importance it would be difficult to over-estimate, though it has become one of the more secluded

xx. nooks even of English history. As the victories of statecraft are necessarily dear to a contemporary, so the triumphs of war are naturally grateful to the historian. The one loves a smooth and bloodless, the other a simple and picturesque solution to political difficulties. But though we may not be able to quarrel with the chronicles for turning from Edinburgh to Ramillies, or from Queensberry to Marlborough, yet in that nobler history which all must read though few have written, the history of human civilisation and human progress, a fairer page will hardly be found than that occupied by the Scottish Union.

For it was not a union such as bound torn Poland to Russia, or uncrowned Venice to Austria. Such unions may enlarge a frontier; they do not create a nation. It added to both nations concerned power, wealth, and honour; it cost no drop of blood, no shadow of shame. As regarded Scotland, it was like nothing so much as a poor man marrying an heiress: mortifying to pride at first; irksome perhaps occasionally; in the long run harmonious because founded on interest; eventually it may be moulded into love by the beauty of its offspring. There was once promulgated a stale taunt, founded on the statement of a baffled plotter, that the Parliament of Scotland had sold for hard cash their support to the Union. One unfortunate nobleman—Lord Banff—has been crucified for the ridicule of posterity as having sold his country and his religion for a ten-pound note. It is true that the nation was poor, which is no reproach;

and that some peers were unable to attend Parliament unless assistance was given them towards their travelling expenses. There is no proof of any corruption more debasing than this, a practice adopted by almost every nation upon earth, notably by the newest and most enlightened —the United States of America. Ministers also at last received those long arrears of salary of which Scotch statesmen at that period so constantly complain. But the thing is so baseless as to be unworthy of notice, while history passes over the Act of Union itself, its jealousies, its discussions, its plots, to record in letters of gold the great internal revolution. xx.

At first, indeed, Scotland seemed to have made but the bargain of Glaucus; to have given her gold for brass, the worth of a hundred oxen for the value of nine. Prosperity and contentment worked indeed slowly, for the Union had not existed six years before a Bill was introduced by the Scots to repeal it, which was only defeated by three proxies in the House of Lords. The Union had not existed five years before the rights of the Kirk as to Patronage had been betrayed and destroyed, whence have flowed in an unbroken stream heart-burnings, disruptions, and secessions. Scotland, again, lost in splendour by ceasing to be a kingdom and becoming a province. Her aristocracy became place-hunters in London, the pliant tools of the ministry of the day. She lost her legislature, and gained in exchange a few votes in an alien senate which in no one respect represented her. She loved well all she lost, but the loss was her gain; it was because of that very

xx. loss that she has become in the nineteenth century on the whole the most prosperous and enlightened portion of the British Empire. For while she was a small poverty-stricken kingdom her views were narrowed; communion in these her provincial days with England widened them. The Parliament and the aristocracy fretted the life out of her; when they were removed she had leisure to fatten and prosper. And it was by that enlightenment and because of that prosperity that she awoke before the middle of this century, and discovered that she was politically speaking one monstrous rotten borough. The shock was rude, but for that reason the Scots determined that it should not occur again.

This intercourse with England, however, came almost entirely from Scotland. The English knew about as much of Scotland as they did of Boeotia, and what they knew they disliked. There was no poetaster who for sixty years after the Union could not earn a trifle by abusing Scotland. Nor did greater hands disdain the work. Dryden had in well-known terms—in "Absalom and Achitophel"—described Scotland under the name of Hebron, and as the climax of contempt sang:

> Let Hebron, nay, let Hell, produce a man
> So made for mischief as Ben Jochanan.

And tells us:

> For never Hebronite, though kicked and scorned,
> To his own country willingly returned.

The key-note struck was aptly followed. Swift, six years after the Union, spoke of Scotland with

such scorn that the Scottish aristocracy went in a body to the Queen to demand punishment for the pamphleteer. England, he said, derived no more advantage from the Union than a man from marrying a wife who brings as her whole dower a great train of poor relations and servants. Fifty years later, Churchill showed equal grasp of the subject. He described the face of the country thus : xx.

> Far as the eye could reach no tree was seen ;
> Earth, clad in russet, scorned the lively green.
> The plague of locusts they secure defy,
> For in three hours a grasshopper must die.
> No living thing, whate'er its food, feasts there,
> But the chameleon, who can feast on air.

And he goes on to enumerate the reptiles which haunted the cave—the sole refuge of man and beast. Toads and efts crawled vainly in search of food :

> And half-starved spiders preyed on half-starved flies.

Even the slugs who " smeared the slimy wall " are described as " pinched with hunger," and the nation itself is thus characterised as

> Nature's bastards, reaping for their share
> What was rejected by the lawful heir.

But this sort of taunt, though revived from the general hatred of Bute, hardly survived the time when Pitt, by summoning the Highlanders from their mountains to fight for the empire, had made them earn on the Heights of Abraham its eternal gratitude and respect.

Now, indeed, the jealousies and distrust which once separated the two countries divide them no

XX. more than does the Roman wall; while it would be wasting time on a self-evident proposition to enumerate the benefits which Scotland reaped from the Union, and which enabled her to smile contemptuously at sixty years of insult and ridicule. Perhaps the shortest way of doing so is to note one or two points of Scotland's poverty before the Union. Her Judges were paid but two hundred a year; the Commissioners of the Union did not extend the hackney-coach duty to Scotland, as there were hardly any hackney-coaches to levy it upon; fifty years after this there were no hackney-coaches, and not half-a-dozen private carriages in Glasgow; the whole currency of Scotland was not £600,000; Glasgow in 1709 was supposed to have lost £10,000 by the loss of a fleet, which was deemed incredible; in the hundred years following the Union the Excise increased to more than fifty times the first yield; Scotland was rated by the Union to pay less than one-sixtieth part of the land-tax paid by England. It is needless to multiply instances of this kind. We might, indeed, sum them up by pointing out how strong must be the counter-balancing advantages which have made us forget for ever the strongest passions of our ancestors.

And there is a still further proof, of an indirect kind, of the enormous change that the Union effected in the fortunes of Scotland. It is this: one is constantly asked, "What did Scotland give for all these benefits? What did Scotland lose by the Union?" The question is enough to make Belhaven rise from his grave. She lost, except her Church only, all that she held most

dear. She was very poor, and therefore intensely proud. She believed herself to be the equal of England in all but the fortuitous circumstances of climate and soil. She solaced herself in her troubles with the notion that she had given England her Kings. The Union was passed, and the Scots saw themselves, for the sake as they thought of some commercial advantages, which few understood and which the vast majority despised, reduced from a King-giving kingdom to a province without a legislature; with a haughty aristocracy ignored and deprived; with a capital, inferior, indeed, in size to London or in refinement to Paris, but still famous and brilliant, shorn of its Court, its society, and its Parliament, descending to the level of a country town. And this is what Scotland lost. To us, indeed, these sacrifices seem trivial. We can neither as subjects regret the Stuarts, nor as men of business the Scottish Legislature; the aristocracy are no longer ignored; and as for Edinburgh stripped of her Court, of her aristocracy and her Estates, who shall say that we have not gloried in her ten times more since she lost those ornaments; that had we to select the proudest period of Edinburgh's history, we should not choose the century that followed in preference to any that preceded the Union? For a moment the dethroned beauty retired behind the veil, but only to reappear in the fairer attributes of renewed youth. During the splendid epoch which succeeded she sent forth perhaps more brave, more wise, and more famous men than any city in the world. Historians

xx. and lawyers, philosophers and statesmen, doctors and architects, soldiers and novelists, wits and economists, poets and rhetoricians—all sprang from her fertile bosom. To one, indeed, she gave birth who was destined not merely to be the delight of every nation and every age, but to treble to his native country the benefits of the Union; for while the treaty only bound England to Scotland, Scott united Scotland to the world.

One word more, and I have done. Our ancestors put their hands to a mighty work, and it prospered. They welded two great nations into one great empire, and moulded local jealousies into a common patriotism. On such an achievement we must gaze with awe and astonishment, the means were so adverse and the result so surprising. But we should look on it also with emulous eyes. Great as that Union was, a greater still remains. We have in our generation, if we would remain a generation at all, to effect that union of classes without which power is a phantom and freedom a farce. In these days the rich man and the poor gaze at each other across no impassable gulf; for neither is there in this world an Abraham's bosom of calm beatitude. A powerless monarchy, an isolated aristocracy, an intelligent and aspiring people, do not together form the conditions of constitutional stability. We have to restore a common pulse, a healthy beat to the heart of the Commonwealth. It is a great work, the work of individuals as much as of statesmen, alien from none of us, rather pertinent to us all.

Each in his place can further it. Each one

of us — merchant and clerk, master and servant, landlord and tenant, capitalist and artisan, minister and parishioner—we are all privileged to have a hand in this the most sublime work of all; to restore or create harmony betwixt man and man; to look, not for the differences which chance or necessity has placed between class and class, but for the common sympathies which underlie and connect all humanity. It is not monarchs, nor even statesmen, that give to a country prosperity and power. France in 1789 had a virtuous monarch and able statesmen. But the different classes of the community had then become completely estranged, and the upper crust of society was shivered to dust by the volcano beneath. In this country the artificial barriers which separate class from class are high enough; but, thank God, they are not insuperable. Let us one and all prevent their becoming so. A great page records the bloodless and prosperous history of the Scottish Union; a greater page lies vacant before us on which to inscribe a fairer union still.

XXI

THE PATRIOTISM OF A SCOT[1]

XXI. I AM here to-day to thank you for electing me Rector of your University, and therefore this is a proud, though embarrassing, occasion for me. I cannot pretend, and I shall not attempt, to express all I feel. At such a moment I should be unworthy of your choice were I not the proudest and the humblest of mankind. The position of Lord Rector of this University is one to which the greatest of our fellow-countrymen have aspired. That you should have chosen me to fill it, therefore, may well exalt me, while, on the other hand, visions of who my predecessors have been, of the grave responsibilities and greater possibilities of the office, of the splendid opportunity and the necessary shortcoming, may well come crowding over me, and cause my voice, nay, my knees, to fail me as I address this most impressive assembly. It would have been a high honour for me to have been elected thirty years hence, when I might at least have had the claims of age and experience. But I was younger than your Rectors usually are: I was

[1] An Address delivered as Lord Rector to the Students of the University of Edinburgh, November 4, 1882.

already the Rector of another University: I had neither learning nor reputation to recommend me: yet you chose me in preference to one full of years and honours, and academical service, and European reputation. Moreover, we know that it is rare for any one to be a prophet in his own country; but I had the good fortune to be selected for distinction in the University of the capital, of which I am a citizen in sympathy, and a near neighbour in fact. You can well understand that all these facts fill me at this moment with a pride which is nearly akin to the deepest humility. XXI.

In this place, where you all knew him, it is unnecessary to speak to you of Sir Robert Christison, nor am I competent to pay a tribute which should be worthy of his fame. What I can speak of from personal knowledge was his unwearied energy, his faithful performance of public duty, and his rare devotion to this University. We often met at the University Court, and I can never forget that old age, inclement weather, and indisposition were impotent to detain him from the discharge of his functions as assessor in that body. No rectorship, indeed, could have increased the honour in which he was held by this University, as we know from the splendid procession which followed him this year to his grave.

When, therefore, I say that I am proud of being chosen your Rector, you well know that it is from no sense of merit, and that I am free from the insanity of putting myself in any comparison, however remote, with Sir Robert Christison.

XXI. None can say what it is at the moment that sways the fancy of youth: it may be political feeling; it may be a passing freak; it may be that that passion for something new which moved the Athenians of old has its influence in our Modern Athens too. I, at any rate, am too grateful and too satisfied to inquire.

But there was one feature of that rectorial election which distinguished it among the three similar elections which were held that year. Both your candidates were Scotsmen, and, indeed, I cannot doubt that I owe my selection to my nationality alone; while in the other contests there was but one single Scottish candidate. I do not think that your action was taken on the mere cry of Scotland for the Scots, for that seems to me but a narrow feeling at best: a similar cry was the mainspring of a party in America which called itself, or was called, significantly enough, the "Know-nothings," and which has now disappeared; while it may be remembered that if other countries were to take reciprocal action, no nation, I am proud to say, would suffer as much as this. I suppose that you wished for a resident Rector, and chose your candidates accordingly. But all the same, that event set me thinking of what is Patriotism, of its adaptability to our times and our circumstances, of its necessary limitations, of its real nature and force and utility; and it struck me that I could choose no more useful topic for my inaugural address, whenever it should be required of me. That moment of trial has at last arrived, and I now offer you a few observations on the

subject I have mentioned. Few and feeble I fear you will think them; but the matter is large, and my opportunities for putting them together have been rare and occasional. XXI.

In the first place, allow me to remark that there is no word so prostituted as patriotism. It is part of the base coinage of controversy. Every government fails in it, and every opposition glows with it. It dictates silence and speech, action and inaction, interference and abstention, with unvarying force and facility. It smiles impartially on the acceptance and the resignation of office; it impels people to enter and to quit public life with equal reason and equal precipitation. It urges to heroism, to self-sacrifice, to assassination, and to incendiarism. It rebuilt Jerusalem and burned Moscow. It stabbed Marat, and put his bones in the Pantheon. It was the watchword of the Reign of Terror, and the motto of the guillotine. It raises statues to the people whom it lodges in dungeons. It patronises almost every crime and every virtue in history.

The freaks to which this unhappy word is subject, the company and costume in which it finds itself, the crime, volubility, and virtue which it inspires, deserve a separate history. But I am not here to record its vicissitudes. I will only offer a definition to serve my purpose to-day. Patriotism is the self-respect of race. It is a motive, or passion if you will, which has animated the noblest efforts, and inspired supreme heroism.

As regards our common allegiance to the

XXI. Empire, little need be said: it is the breath of our nostrils. If I were to descant on it there would be a general feeling that I might as well discourse on the old inspiring theme of *Virtus est bona res*. The patriotism I would speak of is more restricted in area, more limited in scope, but hardly less useful or less respectable—I mean the feeling of affection towards a nationality which is absorbed with others under a common government. The tendency of the age is to the agglomeration of races with a powerful centre, just as villages used to be built round castles; but it is on condition of respecting the various component elements. Now, it is difficult in some circumstances to unite with perfect compatibility the feeling for the nationality with loyalty to the centre. There is no such difficulty in Scotland. But the question is interesting how far the separate nationality may be asserted without danger to the common bond. That is a question too wide for me to discuss thoroughly to-day in all its bearings. Still, I may lay before you a few considerations which make me think it well that the sentiment of race should exist, and should exist vigorously; and I shall point out some of the ways in which it may be usefully exerted. The feeling in Scotland seems sometimes unexpectedly fierce, and sometimes unexpectedly dormant. I do not know that it is in any danger of extinction. It is probably more subject to misapplication; but it is liable to a serious and very natural decay, for it is apt to be considered as a rare specimen or an antiquarian relic: as Etruscan pottery or a toad in marble. Such a

view, though not opposed to its existence, is fatal to its vitality; for it may be preserved as a mummy for centuries after it has ceased to have a vestige of life. I desire to-day not so much to extol its abstract virtue as its practical usefulness, which on consideration is hardly less obvious than its natural limit; and I shall deal more especially with the case of Scotland — firstly, because it is the case of which I am least ignorant; secondly, because I think that in England the sentiment of this lesser or particular patriotism, if I may so call it, is less fully developed, while in the case of Ireland the ground is so dangerous with

XXI.

ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso,

that I may well be excused if I am unwilling to venture upon it.

In England I think this separate sentiment is weaker than with us, for her wealth, her power, and her population make her feel herself to be Great Britain, with Ireland and Scotland as lesser gems in her diadem. Therefore, with an Englishman, the love of Great Britain means the love of England—the larger and lesser patriotisms are one. He speaks, for instance, of the English Government and the English army, without condescending to the terms British and Great Britain—not from heedlessness, but from self-concentration. Where the distinct English feeling shows itself is chiefly in an impatience, if I may so call it, of Scotsmen and Irishmen; perhaps not an unnatural emotion, but not one on which I propose to comment. When an Englishman

XXI. conducts the government of a country, he at once concludes that it becomes English; the thinnest varnish of English law and English method makes it English to his eye. He is satisfied. Every part of the United Kingdom must be English because it is a part of the United Kingdom. Now and then, indeed, some political development excites a passing doubt, but he either spurns the doubt, or relegates the country which has caused it to the indolent category of the incomprehensible. It is a noble self-possession, characteristic of dominant races, without which England would not be what she is; but it is a dangerous guide. Where nations do not readily blend, their characters and humours must be studied. It is open to argument whether it is better that they should blend or not. But I wish to lay before you certain reasons why I believe it to be better that, where the national type is of a self-sufficing character, they should not blend.

In the first place, we may assert with confidence that a race, however striking and distinguished, is none the worse for being varied. Nay, if the whole world were peopled by a single race, however perfect, life would lose much of its interest and charm. And we, as patriots, although we must wish all the races of the empire to possess certain qualities, cannot desire uniformity, any more than we can wish that all our manufacturers should engage in the same industry, or all our men of intellect in the same branch of inquiry. A great empire like the British should be a sheet knit at the four corners, containing all

manner of men, fitted for their separate climates and work and spheres of action, but honouring the common vessel which contains them; not like that massive glacier-mill, the Roman State, which rounded off the resisting bodies within it to a monotonous form, while it crushed and annihilated the weaker. XXI.

I will take, as an example of what I mean, the most compact aggregation of States which has been recently effected—I mean the Kingdom of Italy. There have been amalgamated within the last quarter of a century Rome, Naples, Piedmont, Tuscany, Sicily, Lombardy, Genoa, Venice, Parma, Lucca, and Modena, each of which was formerly a State boasting a separate and distinguished existence. When the repression that had weighed on them was removed, their vitality was found fresh and unimpaired, as vegetation thrives under the shelter of snow and bursts forth on a thaw. But this life was distinct and different in its various forms. They are now one, not possibly without occasional discontent and some secret jealousy, but in the eyes of Europe one and indivisible. The advantages of a united government, the strength, the economy, the pride of life, are apparent. But would it not be too high a price to pay for even such a gain as this, that separate countries should become provinces in name as well as in fact, that these separate types should be effaced, and that nothing but a difference of physical appearance should be visible between Turin and Naples? I know well the danger to which we are exposed in speaking of Italy, for we are apt to take in

XXI. some respects the point of view from which an American considers English matters. The American regards England as an ancestral garden and museum, in which he has a historical interest; he is therefore rather conservative with respect to it, and views innovation here with much the same feelings as a landowner does a railroad projected through his park. In the same way we regard Italy as the pleasance and gallery of the world, and are apt to consider the march of events there less as efforts of reform than as invasions of the picturesque. Well, but I would urge that, for the sake of Italy herself, it is better to keep up the rich rivalry of great cities, which can borrow from each other's abundance of character and idea without losing the mould in which it casts its own citizens.

I take Italy, then, to illustrate the contention that in an empire obliteration is not harmony, nor monotony union, that if a race has ever been a separate civilised nation, it must still contain the qualities which made it so, which are therefore valuable, and part of the common stock of mankind; and that a government or a ruler who neglects or wars against these principles is not merely sinning against national life, but is wasting a source of power as clearly as a general who spikes his guns, or an admiral who scuttles his ships. Even in this practical nineteenth century patriotism and nationality have to be considered and respected.

I almost hear the question: "*Cui bono?* We may be obliged to take this sentiment into consideration, but surely we were better without it.

The English race is one of the noblest and most powerful, if not the noblest and most powerful in the world. Suppose England had effaced your race, as the ancient Picts were effaced, and colonised the country with her own people, would Scotland have lost much, or the world in general ? " XXI.

To which I reply, that not merely Scotland, but England and the world would have lost much. The noblest race, indeed, is a generous mixture of great races. Just as the Saxon, the Celt, the Dane, and the Norman blend in the Englishman of to-day, so the Moor, the Goth, and the Jew helped to make up that dominant type, the Spaniard of the sixteenth century. In the same way we may hold, without disparagement to the Englishman, that this island is the better for containing Englishmen and Scotsmen ; that there is more variety, more depth, more stimulus, and more comparison. Have not, for instance, the educational successes of Scotland done much to stimulate educational enthusiasm in England ? While the lighter graces are denied to us, is there not a dour depth in Scottish character which the Southron may study with advantage ? Would the fascination of visiting Scotland be as great if it were colonised with the inhabitants of Surrey and Middlesex ? Was England any the worse for those Highland regiments that sprang the first into the trenches of Tel-el-Kebir ? Is it not possible that while what remnant of the Scots that escaped would have ceased to be Scotsmen, they might have made but indifferent Englishmen ? Would Bloomfield have been a sufficient

XXI. substitute for Burns? Would Scott have been a wizard in the South? This may be a sentimental view, and far below the cognisance of the philosopher; but sentiment has its power, and, like other gases, it requires cautious dealing.

However, I acknowledge that, in a country like this, the patriotism of everyday life must have a practical basis as well as its sentimental colouring. It must supply a want; it must have a reason of existence; nay, it must have outward symbols to cling to. If it has not these, it is a mere hysterical platitude.

But I contend that there is a very broad principle, and a principle of the highest importance, in the preservation of a national character in a country like this. I used just now the expression "self-sufficing," and I used it deliberately. A country like ours has reached a stage of development when government is really but a small matter compared with national character, and it is the respect for, and assertion of, national character that constitutes patriotism. Up to a certain point nations are apt to be largely influenced by their Governments, but after a certain point Governments are the mere outcome, the mere casual emanations, of the nation itself. The nation has the Government under its control; the Government is its servant, not its master; its destinies are shaped by causes independent of Government. A race that has long possessed its freedom and its free institutions wears them like easy clothes; they are indispensable, they allow the frame to act and the mind to work

without hindrance, but they do not influence the operations of either. XXI.

Take the history of a century or half a century in this country, and what may seem a paradox becomes at once a truism. In a century or half a century important changes take place in a country. You gaze on the face of a century as you gaze on the face of a region; you see great works and transformations, but it does not occur to you to ask who were the ministers by whom they were executed. These are the results, and that satisfies the mind; it is left to the professional historian to examine the details. But, indeed, how are the operations effected? By Government sometimes, but that is only their last stage. The thinker produces the idea, and casts it into the common good; it often long lies lost; presently some one lights upon it, and it reappears; perhaps it may then vanish again, and yet again, till at last it is produced at an opportune moment, and becomes the inspiration of the country. How many old spinsters of ideas have we suddenly seen developed into queenly brides! I will not, of course, allude to political changes, though the same remark applies to them. Nor will I take such an example as our railway system, though that is a strong instance; nor our telegraphic system, though that is perhaps even stronger, as the State stepped in when that was an accomplished fact, and purchased it. But take the general improvement in the dwellings of our labouring classes. That in the country has been caused by the progress of enlightened ideas within the nation.

XXI. In the towns it has been largely caused by the gift and initiative of Mr. Peabody; and when his scheme had been working for some time, Government took it up and gave legislative assistance. Take another movement which has passed all over England, and has raised enormous sums from unimpressionable people, and without the stimulus of any special enthusiasm: I mean that for the restoration of churches, which was set on foot just half a century ago by a handful of enthusiasts. Probably nothing would impress an English Rip van Winkle more than this transformation, which has never even had any point of contact with the Government. Education, which is now considered almost as much a necessity as air and water, owes its present regulation no doubt to Government; but it would have lapsed in Scotland had it not been for the people, and it was only taken up in England long after it had been urged and publicly exemplified by individuals.

But take the case of Scotland. I see that it is calculated that after the Union Scotland contributed only $2\frac{1}{4}$ per cent of the Imperial revenue, while in 1866 it contributed $14\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and that during the same period, while the revenue of England increased 800 per cent, the revenue of Scotland increased 2500 per cent. Was that owing to government? Certainly not. During four-fifths of that time there was but little government in Scotland, and that little as bad as it well could be. The material progress of the country was owing to certain qualities in the Scottish race which, on the lowest ground, I

think these figures show that it would be a pity to let die. But I am content to put that aside for a moment, and I simply take it as an illustration of the fact that the material progress of a country is not necessarily dependent on government.

I hold, then, that the changes that affect the mass of the nation proceed from the nation itself, that the well-being of a free nation depends upon itself. I believe that at this moment the people of Great Britain are better, happier, and more prosperous than their European neighbours, and this mainly because their long enjoyment of self-government has enabled them to know what they want, and to obtain it. With a start of centuries they ought long to be enabled to preserve their pre-eminence. It will be their own fault if they do not. With them the hand and the eye, as with consummate marksmen, are accustomed to act together. They are not precipitate in making up their minds. They allow every influence to operate. They suffer the picture of a possible future to be tested by practical experience and coloured by past tradition; they place it in every light before they allow it to inspire their conduct or to affect their destiny. They are willing to receive and consider all ideas; some they entertain, some they pass over with polite indifference; of some they adjourn the consideration; those that they accept they lose no time in adopting.

If this is so in England, the case of Scotland is even stronger. Scotland has been accustomed to be left much to herself. Till Scott brought

XXI. Scotland into fashion, the country was little known and less liked; and unless a Porteous riot or a young Pretender troubled the political atmosphere, England was only too glad to leave Scotland to herself. And it was well for Scotland that it was so. She attained her majority when other countries were still in their political teens. When others needed support and guidance, she stood alone. And in the future she should find the value of this.

For in a country that is self-sufficing, that governs itself, every element of national life is of importance, not merely because the vitality and the character of a race are intimately connected, but because every part of the country requires to be self-reliant. Every part of the country requires to study and formulate its own wants and its own ideas before it can hope to get a hearing for them. Nay, every part of the country will have, it is easy to see, to be left more and more to its own methods and its own devices, for it is impossible that any central Atlas can be found to bear the burden.

I remember that five years ago there were some figures published which were a waking nightmare. It was then calculated that, taking a generation to be forty-two years, and starting from the present population, at the end of the first generation the population of England and Wales alone would be 44,808,000; at the end of the second, 83,656,000; at the end of the third, 156,000,000; at the end of the fourth, 291,000,000; at the end of the fifth, 544,000,000. What will happen two centuries hence, when the

population will have reached that figure, we may safely leave to our five hundred millions of descendants. But the growth of the population, vast as it is, means this at the present time: that it is well for the different divisions of the empire to be able to take a little care of themselves, and not to hope for too much from the powers of beneficence in London. XXI.

Well, then, my contention comes briefly to this, that it is good for the empire that we should preserve our nationality, and that, as regards ourselves, we should find a use for it. I pass by many kindred topics, such as the great value of the Scottish character as a colonising agency, because I fear to weary you, and because I wish to keep within the boundaries of Scotland. But how, for the purposes I have indicated, is this nationality to be preserved and utilised? It is not evidently mere peculiarities of accent and costume which are meant; it is not by a barren attachment to barren traditions; it is not by insulating the country. I have no time, indeed, to dwell minutely on so great a subject, but if I might offer the suggestion of what I mean, it would be, internally by development and externally by emulation. As regards those who are not our fellow-countrymen, let us endeavour to prove ourselves ahead of them; as regards ourselves, let us endeavour so to raise the standard of our institutions and our people that they may be the envy of mankind. I see no Utopian hope in this: I see nothing political: I see nothing in which the truest patriotism might not stimulate every individual of this nation in his

XXI. own degree and sphere to engage. I see a work in which all might co-operate, an edifice where all might build or help the builders. Let the Scottish ploughman make it clear that he is better than the ploughman of other countries: the Scottish milkmaid prove that she is a better milkmaid: the Scottish housewife neater than other housewives: the labour of the day-labourer more valuable than that of other day-labourers: the fisherman and mechanic more expert than other fishermen and mechanics: and all these will be engaged in a work which will raise their country and will find an immediate reward.

If I take these humbler and manual avocations, it is to strengthen my argument. It is not apparent, at first sight, how an ordinary labourer can raise the reputation of his country. But it is none the less true, and I will give you an instance. Scotland seems to supply the world with gardeners. Now I venture to say that this fact raises the reputation of Scotland. I further think that the association of Scotland with that gentle and beautiful calling has done much to lessen the prejudice against our country. I think the engineers of great steamboats are usually Scots. I speak with apprehension and under correction, and therefore do not emphasise this statement, though I believe it to be a fact. But if gardeners and engineers can raise the reputation of Scotland, how much more, as we get higher in the scale of education and opportunity, may we expect to find Scotsmen adorning the name of their country? What will your chances be? I am not going to name to you the roll of famous

Scottish divines, and statesmen, and lawyers, and physicians, who have been reared here like yourselves : the roll is long and time is limited. But I may at least say this : that your chances of making your country proud of you, and mankind proud of your country, are a thousandfold greater than those of the classes I have mentioned. Your truest patriotism, the truest of every Scotsman, is to be capable and reliable ; wherever a Scotsman goes he is taken as the sample of his race : the best service, then, that he can do to his race is to approve himself a meritorious sample, and his merit will enhance the reputation of the stock. This is not the mere thesis, Be good and you will be happy. It is supplying another and a common stimulus to the energies of a nation which sometimes seems passionately to desire a means by which it can show its patriotism and its mindfulness of past achievement. XXI.

We cannot omit, in considering the practical and practicable outlets for patriotism, the expenditure of money. I need not speak of this in a generation which has seen the Baxters and the Bairds, the Coatses and the Carnegies, and not least my noble friend, your latest doctor, the Marquis of Bute. Great sums have been given and bequeathed for educational purposes, although the flood of private munificence to our universities might perhaps have been even larger but for the fact of Government subsidies. But still as regards the patriotic bestowal of money, Scotland holds her own, and will, I doubt not, continue to hold her own. As an example of

XXI. this and of the internal development, and of the righteous emulation which I advocate, there is the Royal Infirmary, the best equipped in the world, which now adorns this city. Scotland here leads the way: her success will incite other countries to build larger and better infirmaries, so that by this great work she will have benefited herself and society as well. Paisley receives almost annual benefactions from the princely family of Coats. Dunfermline has been adorned, I had almost said revived, by the affectionate bounty of one of her sons. Dundee has recently received a University. Edinburgh has lately been adorned with a cathedral; Glasgow with a public library and a college hall. I take these instances at random, for there are similar cases of frequent occurrence. There is another patriotic method of spending money which I cannot omit in a seat of learning like this, and in which Scotsmen have also borne a distinguished part—I mean by printing and illustrating documents and pieces bearing on the history or literature of their country. What with the book-printing clubs and the liberality of individuals, I suppose that few countries have a mass of national information and materials so fully set forth as Scotland. This may seem a minor matter, but, speaking in the strict nationalistic sense, it is not; for in this way you preserve your archives beyond the touch of time, and enrich the general treasure of human erudition.

But besides the gifts of private benefaction, Scotland has a noble inheritance, of which we are the trustees. For on three external bases we

retain the ancient symbols and facts of independence. Our systems of Religion, of Law, and of Education are all essentially and outwardly different from those which prevail in England. The Church and the Law we kept strenuously and purposely (and when I speak of the Church I mean, of course, the Presbyterian Churches, whether established or not); the Universities remained not by special effort, but because of their fitness for the work. The Presbyterian system and our scheme of jurisprudence would continue to exist even if they were much less efficient than they are, because of what I may call the historical conservatism of the Scottish people; the Universities will continue, not merely because of their present powers and usefulness, but because of their constant readiness to adapt themselves to the shifting conditions of human requirement and intellectual effort. XXI.

I plead, then, that over these three distinctive systems we should watch with peculiar care, with such constant anxiety both to preserve and to improve, both to maintain the spirit while accepting the suggestions of the teeming age, that those outside our boundaries shall recognise that it is their excellences, and the sedulous anxiety with which every opportunity is taken of still further improving them, that divides them from other such systems—not mere peculiarities and catchwords of form.

Not that the people of Scotland have shown a blind love of form, even as regards these cherished institutions. Alterations are constantly made and demanded in the law; the Courts

XXI. have been the subject of constant modification; changes have been effected in the ecclesiastical bodies; the efficiency of the Universities is a subject of constant and vigilant scrutiny; but there is no complaint so long as essentials are left untouched. When Norman Macleod went to visit an old woman who was both a Covenanter and a parishioner, she at once offered him the end of her ear-trumpet, and shouted, "Gang ower the fundamentals!" and we may be certain that it would be perilous for any statesman who was dealing with Scotland to tamper with the fundamentals.

I spoke a moment ago of the historical conservatism of the Scottish people. Nowhere is that historical sentiment in its best and highest sense so strong. It is that which has preserved Scottish nationality, and it is that which will preserve those institutions in Scotland which are worth preserving. Nay, it is the practical determination to keep what it sees clearly is worth keeping, and to sweep away what is not worth keeping; its keen insight into what is valuable and essential, and its indifference to form and pretension, which not merely have preserved the Scottish character but are the Scottish character. There was, it is true, a shriek of dismay from Scotland when she saw her Parliament disappear, and her delegates proceed southwards to London. But a moment's reflection convinced her that the Parliament had not been so efficient as to demand many tears, or to preclude the possibility of imagining a better on the banks of the Thames. Year by year during the last century she saw

Edinburgh becoming less and less and London more and more of a capital. In many countries it would have produced assimilation or obliteration. In Scotland it produced nothing of the sort. She had preserved her fundamentals. She retained her Church, her Law, and her Teaching. Besides these she had her traditions, and the fierce energy required to fight soil, and climate, and poverty. She thus retained the resources and guarantees of her national character. XXI.

I maintain, then, that both in its shrewd and in its sentimental aspects the Scottish character is well fitted to deal with its institutions, and to perfect them and itself. I have indicated that that is, in my humble opinion, the true direction for what is called patriotism in this nineteenth century. We must all, I contend, bear this in mind; it should be part of our mental training; it should inspire our Universities and all the influences that breathe on our youth. It should become a factor in the national life, and it should guide the enthusiasm which history evokes and meditation inflames.

But I hear you ask, Why address this series of hints to us? I speak them to you, although they may not seem proper to the occasion or the audience of a University discourse, because I contend that they are not merely pertinent but vital to the present audience. I speak them, too, knowing that you are by no means all Scots; but advisedly as to those who should understand, and explain elsewhere, why we cling to our nationality, and who will, I hope, bear westwards and southwards that second and higher Scottish

XXI. nature of adoption which Brougham, and Horner, and Lansdowne, and Russell took from their education here. Moreover, with this University and this city of ours you will always have a sacred link. You "will drag at each remove a lengthening," but not, I trust, a painful chain, of which one end will be fixed in Edinburgh. Let me illustrate what I mean. In the last century a Scottish adventurer, called Dow, ran away to the East Indies, and took service and rose to high command under the Great Mogul. One day he was narrating how, when he had charge of that potentate, with two regiments under his command, at Delhi, he was tempted to dethrone the monarch and reign in his stead. Dr. Carlyle —Jupiter Carlyle—asked him what prevented him from yielding to that temptation; and he gave this memorable answer, that it was the reflecting on what his old schoolfellows at Dunbar would think of him for being guilty of such an action. And so I venture to predict that, long after you have quitted this University, its associations will hold and control you, and that you will often be spurred to good, and restrained from evil, by the thoughts of what your old class-mates in Edinburgh would think of you. These matters, therefore, cannot be indifferent to any of you; but to the Scotsmen in this hall they are vital, because on them, in the coming generation, it depends to preserve Scottish tradition and maintain Scottish character.

Much of that character has been taken away from us by the swift amalgamating power of railways, by the centralisation of Anglicising

empire, by the compassionate sneer of the higher civilisation. The present generation will not easily discover the ancient Scottish judge of manifold antics, and I must add bottles; the patriarchal chieftain supreme and sacred on his lonely hills; the candid servant, or rather the tart coadjutor, of the parish minister; we can no longer recognise the condition of society described in Miss Ferrier's novels and *St. Ronan's Well*. The next generation may believe Dean Ramsay to have been an ecclesiastical Joe Miller, or the Dean of Edinburgh that promulgated Laud's Prayer-Book. The present state of things soon passes into tradition, facts become fictions, the real and the unreal become blended in the haze of a decade. Much is passing away, much more must pass away; and it is well. Your old draperies, your old tapestries, your old banners are clutched by the greedy century, and carded and thrown into the mill, that they may emerge damp sheets for your newspapers; and it is well. Your old bones are pulverised that they may dress the pastures; and it is well. Your abbeys and your castles are quarries for dykes, and prize bothies, and locomotive sheds; and it is well. Your archives cover preserves, your ancestral trees pave roads, you sound for coal under your old tower and it tumbles about your ears, your clan emigrates to Glasgow or to Canada, the glen is silent save for the footfall of the deer; and it is well. You scale the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn, and you find a personally conducted tourist drinking bottled beer on the summit; and it is well also. The effigies and

XXI.

XXI. splendours of tradition are not meant to cramp the energies or the development of a vigorous and various nation. They are not meant to hold in mortmain the proper territory of human intelligence and righteous aspiration. They live and teach their lessons in our annals; they have their own worshippers and their own shrines, but the earth is not theirs nor the fulness thereof. For all that, however, these very annals, and the characters they inspire and describe, are our intangible property; they constitute an inheritance we are not willing to see either squandered or demolished, for they are the title-deeds and heirlooms of our national existence.

And so I have ventured to consider with you to-day some of the tendencies and some of the limitations of what is called patriotism. In Scotland I think that spirit rather requires direction than sustenance. What we need is not the passive recollection of the past, though the past should never be forgotten; it is not the mere utterance of time-honoured shibboleths, though we need not disdain these either; it is not the constituting the plaid a wedding garment without which none is welcome, though we may love the tartan well enough—it was not thus that Scotland was made, nor is it thus that she can be maintained. The spirit that I will not say we need—for it exists—but the spirit that we wish to see developed is an intelligent pride in this country of ours, and an anxiety to make it in one way or another, by every means in our power, more and more worthy of our pride. Let us win in the competition of international

well-being and prosperity. Let us have a finer, better educated, better lodged, and better nourished race than exists elsewhere; better schools, better universities, better tribunals, ay, and better churches. In one phrase, let our standard be higher, not in the jargon of the Education Department, but in the acknowledgment of mankind. The standard of mankind is not so exalted but that a nobler can be imagined and attained. The dream of him who loved Scotland best would lie not so much in the direction of antiquarian revival as in the hope that his country might be pointed out as one that, in spite of rocks, and rigour, and poverty, could yet teach the world by precept and example, could lead the van and point the moral, where greater nations and fairer states had failed. XXI.

Those who believe the Scots to be so eminently vain a race will say that already we are in our opinion the Tenth Legion of civilisation. Well, vanity is a centipede with corns on every foot: I will not tread where the ground is so dangerous. But if we are not foremost, we may at any rate become so. Our fathers have declared unto us what was done in their days and in the old time before them: we know that we come of a strenuous stock. Do you remember the words that young Carlyle wrote to his brother nine years after he had left this University as a student, forty-three years before he returned as its Rector?

"I say, Jack, thou and I must never falter. Work, my boy, work unweariedly. I swear that all the thousand miseries of this hard fight,

XXI. and ill-health, the most terrific of them all, shall never chain us down. By the river Styx, it shall not! Two fellows from a nameless spot in Annandale shall yet show the world the pluck that is in Carlyles."

Let that be your spirit to-day. You are citizens of no mean city, members of no common state, heirs of no supine empire. You will many of you exercise influence over your fellowmen: some will study and interpret our laws, and so become a power; others again will be in a position to solace and exalt, as destined to be doctors and clergymen, and so the physical and spiritual comforters of mankind. Make the best of these opportunities. Raise your country, raise your University, raise yourselves. Your light, if you show it forth, will not merely illustrate yourselves, but be reflected here. We, your elders, then, have at any rate a personal interest in observing your career: they, your teachers around me, I, your transient head, may well look forth with anxiety to see if the great wave of learned life that will roll from these walls into the world is to be an influence for good, or an influence for evil, or feebly dwindle into a stagnant puddle: we watch its curling crest without knowing where it will break or what it will effect; we can but mutely hope that it will neither wreck nor strand the vessel of the State, but help to bear it safely on. The words of a moment or a speaker like the present can neither bear a lesson nor bequeath a memory. Were it otherwise, I should simply pray you to love your country; to add this one ennobling motive to

those other dead and living influences of the past, the present, and the future, which urge you on in the path of duty, which sustain you in the hour of trial, in the day of difficulty, in the very valley of the shadow of death. XXI.

XXII

THE FORMATION OF THE SCOTTISH CHARACTER [1]

XXII. My pleasant duty to-day is to thank you for the high honour you have done me in putting me into this illustrious chair. It is not often, perhaps, that a former Lord Rector has returned to your councils as Chancellor, but it is a source of pride that after experience of the Rector you should desire to retain his permanent services as Chancellor. What the duties of Chancellor were intended to be or have been or are it is not easy to say, for they vary in different universities. But I will endeavour to discharge them, aided, I hope, by your kindness and judged by your partiality.

But, in occupying this chair which I have called illustrious, I feel that neither kindness nor partiality can aid me in one respect: I may fill the office, I cannot fill the place of my great predecessor. Others who are competent have set before the world the full roll and measure of his scientific achievements. I shall not attempt an enumeration which needs an expert, or perhaps

[1] An Address delivered as Chancellor of the University of Glasgow, June 12, 1908.

a number of experts. But to the unscientific man there is enough to commemorate. I have been struck in reading his biographies by the practical character of his genius; his alchemy was the art that met a need. It is easy to see that something is required, that some contrivance is necessary to meet new circumstances or to remedy some defect. But that need seemed to appeal to Lord Kelvin, and not in vain; his practical genius set itself to work, and often was able to supply what was wanted. That at least is the impression left on me by the record of his exploits. It is given to few to imitate or emulate those. XXII.

But from his career and from his biography are there not other and larger lessons that may be learnt by all of us? First and foremost, it was a strength and happiness to many that so great a man of science could be so great a Christian. But apart from faith he possessed the noblest moral qualities. In my personal intercourse with Lord Kelvin, what most struck me was his tenacity, his laboriousness, his indefatigable humility. In him was visible none of the superciliousness or scorn which sometimes embarrass the strongest intellects; without condescension he placed himself at once on a level with his companion. That has seemed to me a characteristic of such great men of science as I have chanced to meet. They are always face to face with the transcendent mysteries of nature; they stand on the high mountain apart and are themselves transfigured by what they witness: penetrated with the awe of that communion, they shed, as it were uncon-

XXII. sciously, the petty pride of man, and shine with the humility of real knowledge. Who can be presumptuous who lives in a firmament of worlds, and deals with the unbounded problems of space and time? Such labours produce a sublime calm, and it was that which seemed always to pervade Lord Kelvin. Surely, in an age fertile in distinction, but not lavish of greatness, he was truly great. Individualism is out of fashion. It shrinks and shrinks before the encroachments of modern society, and seems destined to shrink still more. But individualities, great individualities such as Lord Kelvin, are independent of the pressure of circumstances and the wayward course of civilisation—they live and are destined to live,—for they are part of the law of God.

Lord Kelvin was wedded to Glasgow for more than seventy years as student, professor, and Chancellor; he was a resident for sixty-seven, the span of an entire life. Do you remember that exquisite sentence of Newman's? "Trinity had never been unkind to me. There used to be much snapdragon growing on the walls opposite my freshman's rooms there, and I had for years taken it as the emblem of my own perpetual residence even unto death in my university." And so it was with Kelvin still more than with Newman, for his connection with Glasgow was actually unto death, and will survive after death so long as this university shall continue in being.

Although, then, Lord Kelvin's place cannot be filled by any living man, I feel it to be a signal honour to be summoned from the first city of the Empire to the second, from the great metro-

politan university to preside over this ancient seat of learning in Scotland—this "old pedagogy," to use the characteristic phrase which belongs to it. While the University of London dates no further back than the last century, and looks forward rather than backward, her sister of Glasgow has already celebrated her ninth jubilee. But there is at least this connection between them, that the first suggestion of the new university came from the old, from Thomas Campbell, a Glasgow poet born and bred, and a Lord Rector here. XXII.

What a contrast is presented by the small knot of London founders, the keen laymen in the van of modern thought, and the Roman Pontiff who founded Glasgow at the instance of the Roman Bishop, the lord paramount of the little mediaeval town. Cosmo Innes has pictured out of his learning as well as out of his fancy the day and scene of inauguration. He shows us the quaint burgh clustered round the castle of its overshadowing bishop, the gables and forestairs breaking the line of the street, the merchants in their gowns, and the women in snood and kirtle, decorating their houses with carpets and branches before they hurry out to see the show. What shops are open display weapons and foreign finery to attract the country visitors, the yeomen and "kindly tenants" of the barony. There are neighbouring lords, too—perhaps Maxwells and Colquhouns, or scions of the princely families of Douglas and Hamilton—with their retinues and men-at-arms.

And now there appear the first signs of the

XXII. long procession, the nodding crosses and banners that precede the bishop, the prelate himself, William Turnbull, the zealous founder and first Chancellor of the University, proud of the occasion and his success; the endless train of ecclesiastical dignitaries, canons, priests, acolytes, and singers in their various robes, and the friars, black and grey, who are to lend their refectory for the first lectures, and to become some of the most esteemed teachers of the university. And so they move on to the Cathedral, where, amid the smoke of incense and the blare of trumpets, the papal bulls are promulgated, and the university is launched.

Then there is a banquet at the bishop's—a banquet of delight such as we may never partake of, for it is before the introduction of speeches,—there is a miracle play for the people, and the solemn revel is over.

It is perhaps well to allow our frail thoughts to dally for a moment with this retrospect, and to endeavour, in the midst of this mighty, sweltering, prosperous Glasgow around us, to conjure up a vision of the obsequious, episcopal, dependent Glasgow of the past, the unsuspecting germ of all we see to-day. For that is the beginning, so strange and unfamiliar to us, of our university; and here in the twentieth century we stand, I unworthily in Bishop Turnbull's shoes, with the ecclesiastical authority that was the essence of our origin vanished into space, taking the little vassal town with it: in its place a teeming community probably twice as numerous as the whole Scots nation at that time, with the university swallowed

up in the immensity of the city, let us hope like leaven in the lump; all changed in the outward form but not in the inward spirit. The spirit which founded us is still here, the love of learning, the pride of membership in the commonwealth of letters, the ambition to train youth, to train Scotsmen for their country—enlarged by the force of circumstance and of horizon into training men for the Empire. The spirit is the same and the form is not wholly lost; there is unity in development as well as in tradition. XXII.

For universities seem with the churches from which they sprang the most lasting forms of our social organisation. There is, indeed, some subtle salt or secret that keeps universities alive, that makes them indifferent to fortune and to time. It is not the meagre endowments; it is not the material structure, for the soul of our university has inhabited several bodies; it is not the patronage of the great; it is, it must be, a living spirit. They live by the spirit which inspired their foundation, and which keeps them through endless generations eternally young, offering the spring of knowledge from a perennial source, independent of the comparatively transient scenes which history presents. Glasgow, for example, in the four and a half centuries of her existence, has seen monarchs beheaded and dethroned, a republic rule and disappear, the church of her origin disavowed; but these events have not affected her existence. Parliaments come and go, ministries blossom and perish, parties develop and disappear, or change their nature and survive, but she lives on. She lives on because she is a

XXII. national organisation, bound to the nation, adapting herself to the manifold and varying wants of the nation. Had she remained the narrow, semi-monastic institution contemplated, as I suppose, by Pope Nicholas V., she would long ago have been submerged. But here, after nine jubilees, she stands more erect and more strong than ever, ready to breast without a qualm the thronging waves of the successive years and all that these may bring, prepared to mould her scholars and herself to the requirements of this age and of the time to come.

And yet, when we look back to the period and circumstances of her foundation, her permanence and prosperity seem all the more marvellous; it seems incredible that a seed cast on such stony ground should have been able to find even a momentary hold, much less to fructify. It was at the very moment of that capture of Constantinople which is held to mark the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modern history that we were brought into being. Our founder, Pope Nicholas V., who was also the real founder of the Vatican Library and the magnificent patron of learning, while he was signing the bull of our foundation, was inditing with the same pen energetic appeals to the Powers of Europe to stem that Turkish torrent of invasion, which was about to swallow up the gorgeous capital of Constantine and obliterate the Christian Empire of the East. Our English neighbours were in the stress of the Wars of the Roses; and our own condition may be judged from the single circumstance that the Head of our State, the King, had

just stabbed to death his most powerful subject, allured to the audience under a safe-conduct. So exalted an example of lawlessness sufficiently denotes a state of society ill suited for the successful prosecution of university studies. What a sinister beginning for a learned brotherhood! What gloomy prospects faced the new institution! How out of joint the times for tranquil and sequestered research! Could there be imagined more untoward conditions for a seat of learning? Was there room in that Scotland for any school but a school of arms? XXII.

It is a common saying that Scotland owes everything to her system of education. This is true and untrue. True, because when the Scots were able to profit by education they threw themselves into the work with ardour, and gained by the prodigious start which their schools and universities provided over other more tardy and reluctant nations. Untrue, because there was a preliminary and necessary process needed before she could benefit by education or any of the arts of peace. For she had to find peace herself, to be at peace with herself, to be assuaged. She owes, then, a preliminary debt to the influences and circumstances that prepared and enabled her to profit by the boon. She had to be ready to receive her system of education before she could utilise it. She owes, in fact, everything to peace. She had lived on warfare, but not thriven upon it; her fighting quality was of the best, but it was not her true vocation; she was perpetually bleeding from internal wounds. History tells us that in Scotland, long after the foundation of this

XXII. university and her sisters, Scotsmen were living like wild cats, their leaders raiding and preying on each other, not as criminals but as gentry engaged in their lawful pursuits, as natural and as legitimate as hunting and fishing; and that this was the normal state of the country until the improved conditions of society enabled the Scots to discover their true vocation, and to live in an atmosphere which developed liberty and progress.

And yet we must note in passing that even those pugnacious and predatory nobles were not all of them destitute of culture. It is said that Bothwell, the most unscrupulous dare-devil of them all, was addicted to mathematics, and I have seen an abstruse mathematical book which undoubtedly belonged to him. He was educated by a bishop, in the palace of his kinsman, the Bishop of Moray. I take Bothwell as an example of what I mean. He certainly was not an instance of the adage in our Latin grammars that education softens and refines its votaries. But the presumable fact of his acquirements shows that the Church itself, or the Church through the universities, was educating even the turbulent aristocracy long before that aristocracy found its violent vocation gone, and settled down, and allowed the country to settle down. There was indeed an Act passed forty-five years after the foundation of this university compelling every baron or man of property to send his eldest son to school—a sort of educational entail. But this seems to have been a dead letter. Bothwell might have been sent to school under it, but it is

not even supposed nor likely that he was. The education, such as it was, of men such as he came from the Churchmen, who were responsible for the universities.

But it was not to education primarily that Scotland owed the allaying of the feuds and ferocity of her people, which was the first necessity of her prospering, and of her benefiting by the learned arts. That allaying prepared the ground in which the seed of education was to be sown. Before that allaying the universities were only educational fortresses in a barren land facing the feudal castles they were destined to destroy, not without illumination, but, like the great lamp of the mediaeval Cathedral at Ely, casting a light over boundless marshes and impassable swamps. Within their walls the universities were rearing men of learning and repute, but they were not influencing the nation itself; for the nation was not indeed in a condition to profit by them. We had erudition but not education. What nation could settle itself to study when its Queen might be kidnapped between Glasgow and Edinburgh, or her husband blown up in her capital by her lover; or when at any moment a wealthy and powerful neighbour might pour an army into her borders? These are symptoms of a state of society which made anything like general culture impossible.

We are able then, I think, to fix with tolerable certainty the period when Scotland settled down, prepared to benefit by her universities or schools, for it was not long after the particular events to which I have alluded. It was the union of

XXII. the crowns which removed the imminent fear of English invasion, and which prepared and enabled the nation to profit by education. Even then we were by no means tranquil or even secure, for we still had to endure the intervention of Cromwell, who dispersed our host of saints and heroes at Dunbar—because apparently the saints insisted on controlling the heroes in matters of tactics; but that brought some order and appeasement, even though our nobles could not altogether subside. Then followed the second union, not merely of the crowns but of the countries. After that there abode among us peace, commerce, and learning; for the old turbulence only broke forth in rare but terrible mobs, and in chivalrous adventures which did not materially disturb the organisation of the country.

It must, however, in fairness be remembered that the University of Glasgow had not to wait for its prosperity till the union of crowns. The Reformation had indeed struck a serious blow at her fortunes by depriving her of Church teachers and Church endowments, but she was to repair this in a great degree by giving us our second founder, Andrew Melville. That was the happy accident of a masterful man, supremely beneficial to our foundation.

But the broad sweep of fact remains the same —the universities could not thrive till the country throve. When the State is troubled, the shrines of learning languish. To express the same truth in different terms, the health of sound universities is bound up in the health of a sound State. The State gives the university peace, protection,

possibly endowment; in return, the university gives the State, or should give the State, picked men, and now also picked women. XXII.

To that, from my point of view, I subordinate research, and even the encouragement of learning, as the real function of the university in these days. It is no doubt the source of supply for the learned professions, but outside and beyond it gives citizens not necessarily learned, who by training and by character influence their generation, and maintain directly or indirectly the tradition of the State. The work of teaching arts and sciences is going on everywhere, but a university such as this should aim at producing character, indirectly, perhaps, but none the less effectually. We have here for our share some two thousand five hundred students; for these we are responsible; they are the products by which we are judged; we send them forth to the world with the stamp of Glasgow upon them.

What is that stamp to be?

The inquiry is not futile. Oxford and Cambridge impart, or did impart, a distinct character to their men; they had a marked division in politics as well as in learning. Oxford had the traditional and reverential, Cambridge the inquiring or testing spirit. Again, Rugby—under Dr. Arnold at least—was famous as giving a distinct character to its scholars. Why should not Glasgow do the same? And, if so, what is that character to be?

I know what I should like it to be, though in former days in Scotland the suggestion that I am about to offer would have been considered a

XXII. superfluity. We had then in Scotland, more than now, the terrible hand-to-hand struggle, with learning on the one hand and poverty on the other, which embodied in a new form the combative spirit of our ancestors, but which turned out indomitable Scotsmen, who had suffered so much, who had done so much, that they needed and dreaded nothing in the battle of life. We have all known many such instances, but one has come to hand so recently that it may be well to remember it to-day. Dr. Robertson Nicoll has lately published a memoir [1] of his father, who was an Aberdeenshire minister, and one of the most remarkable book-collectors, considering his means, that ever lived. But it is not with that aspect of his life that I am concerned to-day.

In 1830 young Nicoll was a student at Aberdeen University. He had a bursary of £12, of which £8 went in fees. This left £4 for a session of twenty weeks. His lodging cost him a shilling a week, his food was bread and cheese, his drink treacle and water, he had to face the long Aberdeen winter without fuel. (I ask you to remember that I am not recommending a diet but recalling a character.) In this desperate struggle he came off victorious. We remember the kindred struggle and triumph of Carlyle at Edinburgh. Men like these were so braced by what they had gone through that they emerged as the survivors of the fittest; they had nothing more to fear; they were inured and hardened for whatever life

[1] *My Father: an Aberdeenshire Minister*, by Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, 1908.

might have to offer; they were, so to speak, the Tenth Legion of Scottish learning and character. What enabled them to face such a training? Was it not, humanly speaking, that Scottish characteristic of self-reliance—the heart of Scottish independence and Scottish success? That is the stamp that I would fain see the University of Glasgow affix to her teaching and to the graduates whom she sends into the world. XXII.

Many will be disposed to say that that is unnecessary, that in fact it would not distinguish the product of Glasgow from the rest of the nation. It may be so; I wish I thought so; I wish I could think so. Everything is being done to swamp self-reliance, to make it superfluous and almost ridiculous. I am not likely in this place to touch upon politics. But in both the great political parties do we not see that mechanical organisation overrules individual opinion, that individual opinion counts for little or nothing, that independent thought is banned and condemned? Politics were made for man, not man for politics; by which I would imply that men should control politics and not politics men, that politics should embody certain principles and certain needs, and not be the mere shibboleth of a group of prompters. On questions of religion or philosophy or economics, universities still send forth independent voices. I should like to see them train men to think for themselves and act for themselves in other fields as well; men who absolutely refuse to harness their intellects to the current cant of the day, men not angular but true to themselves and their faith. They will find it

XXII. an ill trade, unremunerative and reviled, attended with kicks, unattended with placks; but they will be a valuable element in the State, they will render service to their country, and they will be none the less successful in the ordinary calls and professions of life for the possession of a sterling character.

The plea for self-reliance is after all a plea for liberty, the most sacred and impalpable of national privileges. And yet it behoves us to scrutinise even liberty with a suspicious eye, for it is the word most often abused. The great and sacred principles which evoke enthusiasm contain within them the germs of tyranny; for animated conviction leads to fanaticism, and fanaticism to intolerance and oppression. The bloody tyranny of the French Revolution was carried on under the hallowed standard of liberty itself. Cruel persecution has been constantly exercised on behalf of Christianity, in the name of the Man of Sorrows. And so new ideals, however specious their object, unless guarded and defined, may involve new tyrannies. I distrust a despotism even when exercised in the name of liberty and adorned by the epithet benevolent, for I know the benevolence to be accidental and the hypocrisy permanent. It should therefore be the task of independent men and women who love freedom to resist doctrines which encroach on liberty before these, thriving on apathy, obtain a destructive domination, which, short though it may be, cannot fail to be disastrous and may be mortal.

I would, then, have self-reliance, the quality for which Scots were famous but which is being daily

sapped, the principle for which Chalmers in this very city made so gallant a fight—I would have self-reliance as the assay-mark of this University. It is by self-reliance, humanly speaking, by the independence which has been the motive and impelling force of our race, that the Scots have thriven, in India and in Canada, in Australia and New Zealand, and even in England, where at different periods they were banned. XXII.

As things are, we in Scotland do not take much or even ask much from the State. But the State invites us every day to lean upon it. I seem to hear the wheedling and alluring whisper, "Sound you may be; we bid you be a cripple. Do you see? Be blind. Do you hear? Be deaf. Do you walk? Be not so venturesome. Here is a crutch for one arm; when you get accustomed to it, you will soon want another—the sooner the better." The strongest man if encouraged may soon accustom himself to the methods of an invalid; he may train himself to totter, or to be fed with a spoon.

The ancient sculptors represent Hercules leaning on his club; our modern Hercules would have his club elongated and duplicated and resting under his arms. The lesson of our Scottish teaching was "level up": the cry of modern civilisation is "level down"; "let the government have a finger in every pie," probing, propping, disturbing. Every day the area for initiative is being narrowed, every day the standing ground for self-reliance is being undermined; every day the public infringes—with the best intentions no doubt—on the individual;

XXII. the nation is being taken into custody by the State.

Perhaps this current cannot now be stemmed; agitation or protest may be alike unavailing. The world rolls on. It may be part of its destiny, a necessary phase in its long evolution, a stage in its blind, toilsome progress to an invisible goal. I neither affirm nor deny; all in the long run is doubtless for the best. But, speaking as a Scotsman to Scotsmen, I plead for our historical character, for the maintenance of those sterling national qualities which have meant so much to Scotland in the past. I should like, at least, to think that in one powerful city youth was being reared to know that most of what a man has to do in the world he must do for himself. I should like to think that there was here being taught that empire rests on the character of the nation that aspires to it; and that the British Empire, greater than the Roman, requires at least Roman character to maintain it; that if the Empire, a glorious but weighty burden, is to be worthily sustained, it must be by husbanding our resources, and equipping our people both in character and attainment for their task. It was not by leaning on State support that Drake or Raleigh or Hastings succeeded, but by relying on themselves in despite of their government. It was self-reliance that built the Empire; it is by self-reliance, and all that that implies, that it must be welded and continued.

And surely we are well placed to produce that type of character. We are in Scotland, where every monument, every factory, every ship,

every field breathes of it. We are in Glasgow, which has been raised into one of the marts of the world by the unaided energy of enterprise. We are in the University of Glasgow, which is adorned by the names of Watt and Adam Smith, who, relying on themselves alone, wrought out the systems and discoveries which have made themselves and this University illustrious. Our professors are not secluded monks, but men of the world as well as men of learning. Our students live not in colleges, but in the town and with the town. By a wise provision they are at short periods enabled to select some man of distinction, usually a statesman, as their Rector, who comes to impart to our cloisters the savour of experience and of affairs. XXII.

All these influences tend to produce men and women who shall look, not to external or even legislative support, but to themselves, for their success in life. May those influences be strong and vivid; may the tone and note of this University be independence and self-reliance; may the precepts of this University tend not merely to the advancement of learning, but to the building up of character on the best models of historical Scotland; may it produce not merely scholars but men. Then well is thee and happy shalt thou be: happy in gifts, happy in gratitude, happy in production, happy in service, happy in conscious utility and fruitfulness.

XXIII

THE STRULDBRUG[1]

XXIII. This is a great week in Scotland, when we celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of the foundation of this University; it is the crowning of St. Andrews with the accumulated glories of centuries. And I would that for such an occasion you had chosen some one steeped in St. Andrews tradition and accustomed to inhale the "thin and piercing" St. Andrews air, or that you had at least allowed me to depute one of these experts to deliver this rectorial address. I fear that I shall see them in the audience curling the lip of scorn as they listen to this tyro, this Gentile, venturing on their hallowed and venerable domain. But needs must, since an irresistible authority drives, so I will do as best I can, and gather up what stray fragments remain after the Chancellor's powerful and exhaustive address.

We are met then to-day to pay honour to an august institution on the completion of the five hundredth year of its existence. It is, however, not quite simple to decide which is the proper date to commemorate. The University seems to

[1] An address delivered as Lord Rector to the students of St. Andrews, September 14, 1911, on the occasion of the Five Hundredth Anniversary of the foundation of that University.

have been obscurely at work in 1410, the Charter was no doubt given by Bishop Wardlaw in 1411, but chronological vicissitudes have carried it into 1412, and it was not till 1414 that the Charter was confirmed by the Pope. In February of that year Henry Ogilvy, a young graduate of Paris, arrived at St. Andrews, amid the pealing of bells and universal acclamations, bringing no less than six papal bulls, conveying authority and guidance for the new University. To obtain them he had travelled from St. Andrews to Peniscola in the south-east of Spain, which then, according to our patron Pope, contained the universal Church, and had returned safely with the mysterious instruments, a remarkable achievement in those times. Next day, which was a Sunday, the bulls were presented with conspicuous pomp to the Bishop who was to be Chancellor of the University, and after that ceremony the inhabitants, learned and unlearned, gave themselves up to revelry and rejoicing. Bonfires blazed and wine flowed. Two days afterwards a solemn procession, comprising no less than four hundred clergy, expressed the gratitude of the community for the papal boon. This touch of nature, this authentic description of a festival at St. Andrews five centuries ago, helps to bridge over the waste of time. The exulting chants ring out of the darkness, much as the singing of the monks of Ely sounded over the sheeted waters of the fen to Canute and his followers, in days which were scarcely more savage. XXIII.

It was not as a homage to education, we may be sure, that the townsmen danced and sang,

XXIII. though it were with as much unction and glory as David before the Ark. It was in recognition no doubt of the new dignity added to the little burgh, as in these days when a town becomes a city or a Provost a Lord Provost. But in their exultation they triumphed more wisely than they knew, for they were celebrating the greatest and most pregnant fact of Scottish history during that century. The planting of the first Scottish University in this bleak north was analogous to the erection of a lighthouse on a rocky and savage coast, only on a higher plane and with a larger scope. This magnetic spark appearing in Fife was the source of illumination for all the darkness of Scotland. Before the foundation of St. Andrews it is scarcely too much to say that outside the priesthood there was no higher education in Scotland at all. The ignorance was past belief. It is calculated that not one of the nobility could sign his name before 1370, forty years before our foundation. Two centuries after our foundation Patrick, Earl of Orkney, the virtual king of those islands, a noble of royal lineage, was so ignorant that, being scarcely able to repeat the Lord's Prayer, his execution was postponed for a few days so that he might receive a little instruction before he left this life. Culture, a large and vague phrase, which means, I suppose, the intelligent enjoyment of literature, was confined to churchmen. And yet, ignorance, as we shall see, was the least of the curses of Scotland at that time.

So ambitious young Scotsmen streamed abroad, not as now to people and control distant lands,

but to obtain at the great University of Paris, where they had a College, or at Padua, where they had a Nation, or at the smaller French universities such as Orleans and Angers, that higher education which their own country could not afford. In spite of the rancour between the two countries they were even found at the two ancient English universities. But now, by the noble foresight of Bishop Wardlaw, they were to have access to learning at home. Wardlaw, as the legate and champion of Benedict XIII., also procured the special patronage of that learned though precarious pontiff. For the critical position of Pope Benedict made the foundation of the University urgent. At the Council of Pisa in 1409 he had been deposed, pronounced heretical, and expelled from the communion of the Church: indeed he is no longer reckoned a pope at all; and though faithful Scotland would not acknowledge his deposition, this fidelity, as Mr. Maitland Anderson points out, would cause Scottish students to be considered schismatics at the other universities to which they were accustomed to resort. Moreover, Benedict, two years before our foundation, had anathematised the University of Paris, a curse which would close that school to his followers. So that our adherence to his claims made it absolutely necessary that we should have a university of our own in Scotland, to which the students of his obedience could resort. This foundation was then a work of necessity as well as of mercy. Seven years afterwards adherence to Benedict was no longer possible, and in 1418 our University transferred

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XXIII. its allegiance to Martin V. But fidelity had had its reward in that it had brought about the erection of this centre of study and learning.

Nor was the foundation precious only for itself; it excited wise and generous emulation. Forty years afterwards Glasgow claimed and obtained similar privileges. That University was also founded by a bishop under a bull from a Pope, for indeed there was no other way, unless a bull could be obtained from the Holy Roman Emperor. But without the public spirit of the bishops there would have been nothing to set the papal machine in motion, and so no universities. Let us not then forget the honest debt we owe to these prelates, though their office has so long been an offence and a stumbling-block to strenuous Presbyterians. A like period again elapsed, and Aberdeen in a similar way obtained its University, founded with a view to civilising the Highland clergy, whose ignorance, as we may well believe, seems to have been formidable. But it was from St. Andrews that the light and inspiration came, and it is St. Andrews which must be hailed as the mother University of Scotland.

It is impossible to overestimate the blessing which St. Andrews thus conferred upon the ancient kingdom. For it was not only the Highland priests who needed civilising, it was the nation itself. We cannot exaggerate the barbarism of our country at this time, the reign of naked violence, of unblushing cupidity, of relentless cruelty. Ten years before the foundation of this University, on the very spot where it was inaugurated, the eldest son of the King, the heir

to the crown, was torn or allured from this Castle of St. Andrews, and carried to Falkland to be murdered, by, it is alleged, a death of calculated agony. Twenty-five years afterwards the King of Scots was himself assassinated. You remember the mournful utterance of King Robert III. in the *Fair Maid of Perth*. "Alas, reverend Father, there is in Scotland only one place where the shriek of the victim and the threats of the oppressor are not heard, and that, Father, is the grave." This is the summary of the state of the country at this time by our great magician, deeply versed as he was in our history, and it is not an exaggeration. The two murders that I have just cited would alone prove its accuracy, for princes must have been on the whole less liable to violence than their subjects. Whether that be so or not, their lives and liberty were always at hazard. At the very time, indeed, when our University was founded our King was a prisoner in the Castle of Nottingham. XXIII.

These things, which we can scarcely realise in this Coronation year, when the King and Queen and Heir Apparent have been received with such a frenzy of enthusiasm, sufficiently characterise the epoch, and make it all the more remarkable that at this black and cruel time the first University was being set up in Scotland. Assassination, indeed, is not the fruit or symbol of any age, it is always with us. But in the very year that we celebrate to-day, the year 1411, there was a stranger sight to be seen, one famous and unique. On July 24, St. James's Eve, there were to be seen by the Water of Ury in Aberdeenshire, some

XXIII. score of miles north of Aberdeen, a Highland and a Lowland army arrayed in battle against each other, the one led by the Lord of the Isles, the other by the Earl of Mar. Both fought desperately, but the undisciplined valour of the Highlanders broke in vain on the solid square of their opponents. It is difficult to believe, as Hill Burton tells us, that this battle of Harlaw was felt in the Lowlands to be a greater deliverance than Bannockburn. But the Highlander was not less the enemy than the Southron. To imagine that the Highlander and the Lowlander could be blended into one nation, proud of the union and the common name, would have seemed in 1411 an insane delusion to either side. Moreover, what the English could do was known, it was habitual, the razing, burning, and devastation of the country. What more the Highlanders could do it is not easy to see, but there was the terror of the unknown. At any rate, this combat decided whether civilisation should rule in Scotland.

That is not to say that the Highlands were appeased. For generations afterwards they were always fighting. Life in the North seems to have been one long warfare. But they fought among themselves, and left the douce bodies in the South alone, though they took the available cattle. It is not possible to guess how the Lowlanders could have survived at all had they been equally harried from the North and the South. What an anxious spectacle for our infant University. Its pulses must have ceased to beat while the result of the raid remained in suspense.

And what a strange collocation for History, which marks 1411 with St. Andrews and Harlaw, the beginning of Scottish learning, and the final struggle with Scottish barbarism. XXIII.

Not that Harlaw closed the reign of violence in the Lowlands or the Highlands. For two centuries after this our domestic annals, if domestic they can be called, record little else. Savage murders followed by savage vendettas are found in every page. In the absence of effective justice each individual took the law into his own hands. The code was simple, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, or, if possible, two eyes for an eye and two teeth for a tooth. The feud began in murder or rapine or both, and was wrought out in blood. It was not till the seventeenth century that we see any real note of civilisation or any sign of amelioration. This then was the age of darkness in which our little glow-worm of a university displayed its modest light, these were the conditions with which it had to cope, this was the lump which it set itself to leaven. Nothing could be more unpromising. But mark the result.

I ask you to remember this, that our University of St. Andrews, for I belong to it for the moment, and am proud to belong to it, is all that remains of the Scotland of that time, with the possible exception of the Convention of Royal Burghs. The ancient Church which founded it in the days of its domination has made way for another which long exercised an authority not less absolute and an inquisition even more scrutinising, but which now pursues its sacred

XXIII. task with piety, purity, and toleration. Our Crown is merged in a loftier diadem, and the King of Scots is sovereign of a mightier Empire, though none the less King of Scots. Our Parliament, our Privy Council, our ministers have vanished. Our College of Justice had not then come into being. All that Scotsmen in 1411 prized and venerated has disappeared like a snow wreath; only this little University, bleached by time, often poverty-stricken, often all but submerged, lashed by a thousand storms, of the ocean, of politics, of religion, of revolution, this alone survives.

Surely that is a notable fact. Before this frail shrine of learning by the Northern sea, the lamp has always been kept alight. And the reason possibly is this: that partly from the veneration it inspired, partly from its learned character, partly from its comparative poverty, it has remained outside the political arena. What the acid of party touches it generally corrodes and often destroys. But this venerable institution, though it has witnessed some of the most stirring and tragic episodes in Scottish history, has kept itself, as best it could, aloof from the political life of the time; it has consecrated itself to learning; and the blasts which have swept away so much have left it unscathed. The east wind no doubt has brought it many Royal Commissions, sent in the benevolent belief that Royal Commissions are the proper diet of Universities, or that Universities are the proper diet of Royal Commissions. But even these have done little harm, and occasionally some good. Had it been wealthier, it must have been plundered by hungry

governments, and possibly have vanished like the church which founded it. But its meagre endowments and its beneficent purpose have served it well. The city has seen, it is true, its cathedral wrecked and its castle demolished. Those represented institutions which were repugnant to faction. The Cathedral was the embodiment of that Church on whose abolition zeal and enthusiasm were set, and the one disappeared with the other. Still, the new Establishment would not have prospered any the less had the splendid structure been spared which it took a century and a half to rear, and which might have survived for the reformed worship as the noblest monument of Christianity in Scotland. It is happily by no means certain that the Reformation was responsible for this calamity. But in times of revolution all bounds and all wisdom disappear. The glorious castle, which had seen so much violence and so much intrigue, which had been one of the battered corner-stones of Scottish history, that, too, like other fortresses, had to be demolished, for politics raged round it. But, while fortresses and cathedrals crumbled, the little grey University, not the object of rancour and rapine, still reared its modest head, and lived. XXIII.

To-day, then, we stand, looking across the abyss of five centuries, face to face with the University at the moment of its birth. It is wonderful to think how little in outward form it has been changed by the lapse of time, when all else has been transformed past recognition. Chancellor, Rector, and Principal still face the Chancellor, Rector, and Principal of those days :

XXIII. and the professors with altered titles confront the Regents of 1411. With only one of these am I concerned, the Rector. Conscious as I am in contemplating my predecessors that I fall far short of their powers and prerogatives, I am consoled by the thought that the Rectors then were resident officials in holy orders (as the Rector is bound to be), whose activity and office made them extremely distasteful to the town, and by no means sympathetic to the gown. But, for a reason I will presently tell you, I strain my eyes to see the first Rector, whom I can only discern by imagination as a lonely and harassed figure on the remotest horizon.

When we look back over these five hundred years, what is it that we learn ? Of the ebb and flow of the University, its educational modifications, Mr. Maitland Anderson has said with consummate knowledge all that is to be said. The Chancellor too yesterday comprehended all in his admirable survey. Of St. Andrews itself I could say nothing to vie with the brilliant book, now too difficult to obtain, of Mr. Andrew Lang, nothing perhaps to add to the dreary and biassed compilation of the Rev. Mr. Lyon. And yet outside these there must be some useful lessons to be learned ; we cannot survey the five centuries of our history without obtaining some light and some guidance. There must surely be some general conclusions to be drawn from this long sorites of generations in such a shrine of history as this ancient city ?

Now, while considering my double function of celebrating your five hundredth birthday, and

delivering a rectorial address, a strange, whimsical fancy came into my head. Have any of you heard of the Struldbrugs, one of the weirdest conceptions that ever proceeded from the powerful and morbid brain of Swift? If you have not, I ask you to remember that the hapless Lemuel Gulliver in the course of his travels lit upon the island of Luggnagg after leaving the kingdom of Laputa, and that there he heard of the existence in that nation of a race doomed to immortality, born with a circular spot on their foreheads which marked their perennial fate. On being told this, the innocent Lemuel burst out into an ecstasy of envious rhodomontade. Were he a Struldbrug he would do this and do that, there would be no limit to his happiness, power, and beneficence. The natives listened with a smile, and declared these predestined immortals to be of all men the most miserable. For at eighty years of age they had all the infirmities of senility, with the additional horror of preserving decay through eternity. At ninety they lost their teeth, their hair, and their memory, which need not surprise us; and, as language is always on the flux, the Struldbrugs of one age did not understand those of another. Nor, for the same reason, could they converse with ordinary mortals, and so they lived like stigmatised foreigners, almost like lepers, in their own country. It is strange that Swift in this enumeration of the curses of immortality did not mention the greatest of all, which is that they must have been constantly stabbed by novelties and perplexed by inventions. They must have been helplessly buffeted by the revolutions of

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XXIII. time and circumstance. They must have been unwillingly tossed on every storm of human mutability. Every thinking man, not devoured by a diseased curiosity, must reckon mortality as a great blessing, if for one reason alone, which is that man has not more than a certain stock of receptivity and adaptiveness, and that after a limited number of years the inevitable changes in the world are all irksome and, as his life lengthens, even repulsive to him. Youth was his season of strength and gladness, and he pictures the ideal world as the world of that period. So that, as the world moves onward, he is left further and further behind, suffering at each change all the anguish of a wound.

This is a digression, but even the tragic mockery of Swift may be a relief in a rectorial address. Now my fancy was this. Suppose your first Lord Rector in 1411 had been a Struldbrug, but without the drawbacks of that exceptional position. He might lose his hair and teeth, for that loss is not confined to Struldbrugs. But he must for my purpose keep his memory (though that in mortals usually accompanies the hair and teeth). He may, for all I care, have a mark on his forehead, but he must be discriminating, acute, and observant. Then please to imagine with me your first Lord Rector, whoever he may have been, as an intelligent and remarkable Struldbrug. He must have lived through five centuries, noting, not without an occasional spasm, the vast changes that he has witnessed. And I am certain that on this occasion what he would have to say would be far more worth

hearing than any words of mine. I ask you then to dream with me, and imagine what such a figure would have to utter to you to-day; let me shroud myself in his more ancient and illustrious robe. XXIII.

Well, he assumes office, and what I remember Professor Bain calling the academic purple, which is, I presume, what I am wearing now, in 1411. He is, so far as I can ascertain, largely a secular officer, a sort of buffer between the university and the city. But he is a man of eminence, at any rate of local eminence, though I have searched in vain for his name; it is alleged, but not without doubt, that he was Laurence of Lindores, a great theologian, and like the great theologians of that day a great persecutor, but it matters not; he takes precedence of the Prior and next after the Bishop; he is chosen for his character and authority, and, according to my hypothesis, watches intelligently the course of events. I do not propose to go through the circumstances of the five centuries which he would observe and endure. But there are some notable facts that one cannot omit.

He could scarcely, for one thing, have remained a respecter of persons. He would have seen a fair proportion of our few archbishops hanged or assassinated. He would have seen dummy bishops content to collect their lawful incomes for the benefit of unscrupulous laymen, and appointed for no other purpose. He would have seen the Scottish peerage almost annihilated on a single battlefield. He would have seen five of his sovereigns die of violent deaths, and their line

XXIII. eventually wither and perish in a foreign land. He would have seen the great Church which had overshadowed Scotland, full of wealth, power, and renown, fall like the walls of Jericho at the blast of the trumpet, which would also blast the material prosperity of St. Andrews. He would have seen the Church which succeeded it, not less ambitious of power, attempt to found a theocracy of which it should be the visible instrument, but ultimately confined by the good sense of the people to its spiritual functions, for its own great advantage, and for the strengthening of its legitimate action. Each and all of these blows would strike straight to our Rector's heart, but he would have to survive them.

He could preserve but little cheerfulness, for he would have seen or heard of the countless tragedies which so long marked our annals, as Scotland must have been for centuries a dark and joyless country. He would have witnessed the long tragedy of the realm, the welter of blood, the flames of martyrdom. He would hear the wail of Flodden. He would be told one morning that the chief man in Scotland, the great cardinal of St. Andrews, had been murdered in his bedroom, and would see his bloody corpse dangling from the castle. He would learn with dismay that the young queen, whom he had seen a girl of gay beauty in this city, had been imprisoned and beheaded in England. He would see her son depart to mount the English throne ; and, henceforward, for long generations, his kings would be as nothing to him. He would see much of John Knox, who must have been an awful figure to the

old Romanist, sometimes in his vigour "dinging his pulpit to blads," sometimes in his old age tottering about the city, leaning on what was destined to be a great ecclesiastical institution in Scotland, the minister's servant; sometimes suspected, and we may be sure believed by our Rector, to be raising the devil in his back garden. He would receive with respectful awe Jerome Cardan, the physician of world-wide renown who came from Italy to St. Andrews, lured, or at least rewarded, by an enormous fee, to cure the archbishop, who was saved by his care, but saved only for the gallows. He would watch among the students the gay youth of Montrose and the reserved youth of Argyll, both destined to conspicuous lives, and to end on the scaffold, with equal dignity and courage. He would mark the exquisite features of Claverhouse, doomed to a bloody renown and to a triumphant death. Later again he would see a sturdy student of Argyll's clan who rose to the Woolsack and the seat of Chief Justice by hard work, who enriched our literature with books full of entertainment, the best about himself, and many racy volumes about the other chancellors, I mean Lord Campbell. He comes oddly with Montrose and Claverhouse. I bring him in here by violence, so to speak, because he should never be forgotten in this place as a type of the hard-headed, self-reliant, successful Scot. Statesmen and princes, like students, would pass in the procession of their generations. He would see Charles I. come and go. He would see Cromwell come and go. He would see Charles II. and James II. come and

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XXIII. go. He would see the firefly flutter of favourites come and go, Albanies, Bothwells, Lennoxes, Anguses, and the like. One favourite, the Chastelard whom poets still remember, he would see executed here in St. Andrews. He would bloom or wither, as the case might be, under the long line of ecclesiastics who have adorned or controlled St. Andrews, the Beatons and the Melvilles, Wardlaw, Kennedy, Knox, Rutherford, Sharpe, Chalmers, and Tulloch. I might almost include Buchanan, as a Moderator of the General Assembly, a post to which no layman, not even our Chancellor himself, might now aspire. He would see the University sometimes plundered, sometimes ruined, sometimes shivering in dumb decay, but containing an indestructible principle of life which enables it to survive. Under these circumstances he would probably evade the pungent inquiries of Dr. Johnson. Perhaps it was he who locked himself up in the ruined chapel of St. Rule, and thus escaped the fierce inquisition of Boswell and the Sage.

And in the material world he would have beheld strange transformations. Aeneas Sylvius had marvelled to see the poor at the church doors depart joyfully on receiving an armful of stones. These stones our Rector had literally seen turned into bread, for these rare coals were the germs of that great industry which has been at the root of so much of Scotland's prosperity. He who had seen the little squadrons of Scotland, the *Yellow Carvel* and *The Flower*, would behold the affluent Clyde developed into one of the greatest shipyards of the world. Near at hand he would see the

Forth arched by a gigantic bridge, and blazing at night with ships of war, a fraction of the imperial armada. He would have seen the barren wolds and moors of Scotland transformed by science and labour into the very models of agriculture. He would have seen developed the mystery of steam, cutting through deserts, ploughing through the ocean, awakening to life the Hebrides and the Orkneys. He would have seen a score of obscure villages transformed into puissant communities, ringing with hammers and machinery, and with the passionate din of toil. The naked, plundered, harassed Scotland of his youth would he have seen changed into a fervid hive of industry. Our poor Rector, pummelled by new inventions, beaten like a horseshoe on the anvil with a thousand new discoveries and sensations, would become almost shapeless and sodden, but would gasp and survive. He would curse the coal and the electricity, the steam and the shale which had superseded the obscure and patient handicrafts of the fifteenth century, and which had obliterated the Scotland of his youth, but, tough and suffering, he would, according to my fancy, live on, notebook in hand. XXIII.

And then at last he would come here to this hall, having lost many of his attributes and powers, and even inches in the course of time; he would yet come, weary and wizened but composed, to fulfil the sacred duty of delivering a rectorial address. Would that he were here in the flesh; how gladly would I listen, and not speak! He would appear with all the experience of five centuries, with no illusions left, battered

XXIII. by all the storms of time and circumstance, to speak to you young people, and also on such a celebration to the elders as well, to the latest of the long line of principals whom he had known and battled with, to the professors who have succeeded the regents he had vainly tried to control. He would have lost many inches, as I have said, for age shrinks us to nothing, and it was Lowell, I think, who imagined Methuselah on his thousandth birthday, had he reached it, complaining that he would be quite comfortable if only his confounded shoestrings would not flap in his face. So our secular Rector would be exiguous, so small as to be served, like Sir Geoffrey Hudson, in a pie, but every inch and ounce of him would be wisdom. You would perhaps smile at his appearance, lost in his little gown, but you would listen to him with reverence. He would survey you with the eternal and passionless gaze of the sphinx, and at last he would break into speech, unintelligible perhaps to all of us in accent and phrase, but which, strained through an antiquarian interpreter, might contain somewhat of value.

What would he say to us? Well, that is matter of imagination as he is himself, and it would be a bold man who would endeavour to extract by any known crucible the patient result of five centuries of observation. But let us have the courage of conjecture.

Would he not first tell you that his one great joy as the centuries progressed was to be free from religious intolerance, or from the open boast and practice of religious intolerance? He had

known the time when it ruled the world, when it was the highest proof of sincerity, the very pivot of faith. He had seen, under the assumed patronage of a merciful God, abominable cruelties wreaked on innocent men and women, burnings, slayings, hideous torture and imprisonment, he had seen Protestants, Catholics, witches, all suffer, and had rejoiced to survive the time when free opinion had to be concealed like a crime, and when persecution was the vaunted touchstone of religion. That would be the greatest relief of his career, and though he would see that intolerance is not completely out of fashion, and though he might think that individual liberty may yet be impaired by governments and other powerful bodies, he would rejoice that it is no longer under the pretext or authority of Christianity. There are no doubt still extant, we all know some of them, excellent, benevolent, and high-minded men, who would burn and hang with all the grace and complacency possible those who differ from them in religion and in politics; I have even witnessed literary disputes which seemed likely to end in blood. There are also many, who are not in the least excellent, benevolent, or high-minded, who would exterminate with gusto those who venture to disagree with them or to restrain them. But there is no longer room for capital sentences on free opinion. Indeed they seem to us inconceivable. And yet it is safe to assert that the greatest marvel of our aged friend's life would be the change of attitude on this question of toleration. XXIII.

The next great transformation which he would

XXIII. contemplate with supreme content would be the supersession of violence by law. In his earlier years, nay in his earlier centuries, each man was a law unto himself, there was no visible or tangible justice, except the hazardous and baronial remedy of "pit and gallows." This venerable city does not seem to have been better than other places in respect of lawlessness; at one time indeed it was said to be in the condition described in a famous line as "problematically pious but indubitably drunk." But no man anywhere in Scotland could safely walk unarmed till, probably, the end of the seventeenth century, and after dark in Edinburgh he would not have been safe till much later. Now our Rector would find—not a total absence of violence, far from it, very far—but he would see the excuse for it removed by the universal sway of justice, from the Sheriffs to the High Court, from the High Court to that Higher Court which lurks in the ruins of the House of Lords. All this is platitude from me, it would not be platitude from my excellent predecessor. He, remembering the reign of violence, would welcome the reign of law with an enthusiasm that we cannot feel, for in that respect we are free born. He would tell you that this beneficent reformation cannot be sufficiently appreciated by our generation who know nothing worse, and he would solemnly enjoin upon us the duty of cherishing and supporting the courts of law, as one of the most essential bases on which society rests.

Then, after dwelling on the two greatest changes which had occurred in Scotland in his

time, he would perhaps condescend to give in the way of counsel some positive result of his enormous experience. XXIII.

Well, he would tell you, I think, to take large views, not with regard to your trade or profession or the gaining of your daily bread, or even with regard to your studies, but with regard to the circumstances of your time. He would tell you that he had lived through dark days and fair, that in his immense voyage through the ages he had chanced on various weathers, but that on a comprehensive retrospect he was inclined to average the centuries, and take a hopeful view. That on the whole, though he had suffered more than he had enjoyed, as is the common lot, he believed that he could perceive through his score of generations a constant movement for the better in the world. Sometimes cruelty, tyranny, and the barbarous indiscriminateness of revolution had seemed to cloud the sun, but that through it all there was a visible hope that, in spite of suffering and injustice, there was being slowly and painfully evolved a better state of things.

He would remind you of the dismal chaos in which he first took up his high office; violent, ignorant nobles, violent, ignorant clans, a peasantry of serfs relieved mainly by monastic charity, opposition to government only expressible by assassination or rapine, a Church whose wealth was the lure of greed, a country divided into two parts, the one handed over to barbarism, the other to the ravages of the English. He would show how the Reformation, which was for the moment a merciless revolution which ruined St. Andrews

XXIII. and much else besides, but which roused Scotland into a keener intelligence and a manlier faith, was accompanied by a rapacity on the part of the aristocracy and a brutality of wreckage, which must have obscured its benefits and caused sorrow and alarm to many of its well-wishers. But here again amid much outward convulsion, and with much to deplore, a great step was gained. Then he would point out how this manifold reform again degenerated into a spiritual tyranny and a domestic inquisition, which, had it been successful, might have crushed and emasculated the nation. But before that result could be achieved, if it ever could have been achieved, a counter tyranny was established, which redressed the balance and braced the energies of Scotland to resistance, thus enabling Scotsmen to attain a singular independence, by which they not merely thwarted the persecutions under Charles II., but freed themselves from the petty and humiliating tests of their local synods. It was perhaps the boots and the thumbikins, the harrying of the obstinate saints who worshipped in the mosses, the attempt to hound and bully the people into an alien conformity, the reaction from an officious Church government, which formed and exalted the Scottish character. Once more a step was gained through travail and stress. Freedom was obtained from interference of the Church outside its own province, and the race was strengthened by resistance to oppression.

Then came the Union, and my Struldbrug would tell you that it seemed the end of all. A shriek of despair arose from Scotland, for all

seemed to disappear, all but our Universities, frugal Colleges cultivating the humanities on a little oatmeal. The King had long vanished, but now there followed him southwards ministers, parliament, nobles, and all the waiters upon Providence. The life-blood of the country seemed sucked into England. Some of it went no doubt. Aye, but the heart remained. The patient peasantry, the doughty lairds, too poor or too proud to go, the parochial divines, the merchants produced and nourished by the Union remained, and wrought out undisturbed the prosperity and character of the nation, undisturbed by politics and that selfish contention of politicians and nobles which had so long blighted the country. What had seemed ruin was indeed salvation, for it brought about the disappearance of party strife from Scotland. For a century and a quarter after the Treaty, Scotland was free from politics, a result due to the Union. Outside the pious polemics of the General Assembly there reigned a supreme calm. Mark then, adds our eternal Rector, how on a large survey we perceive that what had seemed the wreck and catastrophe of the nation was the direct cause of such wealth, power, and peace as it had never known before. Mark, too, he would add, how little statesmen can do for a strong, self-reliant race. Scotland rose and throve by neglect. She prospered more in the century during which she was forgotten and ignored by Parliament than in all the centuries before or since. That is a lesson from which many inferences may be drawn, some visible, some occult, which in any case are not likely to

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XXIII. be recognised now, but which may be realised hereafter.

But this at least may be noted. We at this time seem to be in some danger of becoming a spoonfed nation. What is in the spoon it is not for me to say, the future can only reveal. It may be nourishment, it may be poison, it may be simply some languid and relaxing potion. Whatever it be, noxious or beneficial, let us at least remember that it was not by such means or in this way that the Scottish nation was braced and built up. By proceeding on our present lines we may produce a nation stronger, nobler, and more self-reliant than it has hitherto been. But it was not by such methods that the strong, noble, and self-reliant Scottish nation, as we have known it, was evolved.

How then would our undying Rector sum up? "Be of good cheer," I think he would say. "You have gained enormously in my long recollection, much in freedom, much in prosperity, and the admiration of mankind for your race. If there are momentary shadows remember this, that depression often arises from too limited a view. There are ages and cycles in history; the man who judges from a lustre should enlarge his range. He may live under a cloud for a moment, but he should raise his eyes to the hills and remember the eternities. My world has disappeared, the ideas, the standards, the human types have all been washed away by the deluge of time. A few old walls, which I can hardly recognise in their new surroundings and the idolatry of golf, are the only fragments to which

my memory can attach itself; they and the waves which lap them alone remain. I have seen generations come and go like tides, and they have left me stranded in loneliness. I cannot remember and I cannot forget. I have lived through storm and sunshine, sometimes bewildered by both, but," he would add, "as time made events clearer and brought occasions into their true proportion I have been conscious of progress to the light. I entered upon office in mediaeval times, forty years before the date of the fall of Constantinople. That overthrow of the great bulwark of our faith and civilisation in the East caused a crash throughout Christendom, it seemed the end of half history; but we have lived through its effects. I have seen cyclones in which thrones toppled over like ninepins, and sublime heads rolled in the dust like apples in an orchard. I have seen eclipses that seemed eternal, and the rivers as in Egypt turned to blood. I have seen life and death and glory chasing each other like shadows on a summer sea, and all has seemed to be vanity. But I remain in the conviction that, though individuals may suffer, when we take stock of a century at its end, we shall find that the world is better and happier than it was at the beginning. *Sursum corda.* Lift up your hearts, for the world is moving onward. Its chariot-wheels may crush for the moment, but it does not move to evil. It is guided from above, and guided we may be sure with wisdom and goodness which will not abandon us. That is the comfort which even in blackest darkness must afford light. And so," your ancient Rector

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XXIII. would continue, " if I am destined to live through the next five centuries, and behold the millenary of St. Andrews, I shall see no doubt a community as different from this as is this from that of 1411, but as much better, happier, and wiser than the University of 1911, as is the last from the first."

To these words which convey the wisdom of your first Rector his present fleeting successor has nothing to add. He is perhaps not so convinced an optimist as his excellent and fictitious predecessor: he sees the present shadows and distractions more clearly than the ultimate outcome; he, poor mortal, cannot chew the cud of centuries; he cannot see beyond the horizon or discern the silver linings of the clouds, he can only look to the morrow and scarcely to that. But he believes that the patriarch substantially expresses the historical truth in the crumbs of ripe experience which we have been privileged to gather.

And now, and in my own person, I should like to perform what should have been my first duty, which is to thank my young constituents, who so generously and unanimously chose me as their Lord Rector at this signal epoch in the history of this University. I have lived many rectorial lives, and I thought that they were all extinct. So that it is pleasant and grateful in the cool of the evening to find oneself still living, and received with such bountiful kindness by the ancient mother of Scottish learning. I would add the hope that you, and indeed all of us, may long remember these hallowed days of memorial; I trust that you will carry from them the animating consciousness that you are the heirs and offspring

of five centuries of serene and laborious life to which the whole civilised world is now paying homage; that you will bear on you throughout your career, not less patent but less sinister than the mark of the Struldbrug, the stamp of St. Andrews; that wherever your lives may run you will maintain the honour of Scotland, and of this "ancient and mother city of the realm." And to those who have ears to hear there will always be a voice from these old walls which will speak as a second conscience, calling on you to aim high and follow the light, where the light can be discerned; bidding you in the words of your own motto, *αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν*, ever to excel; and exhorting you to face the necessary storms and tribulations of life with the same patient strength which has enabled your ancient University to endure and survive the revolutions of five centuries. XXIII.

Lastly, it will tell you to hold fast to the strenuous patriotism and the simple creed of our fathers, remembering this solemn truth, that a nation which preserves its faith in God and in itself can never fail, can never come to an ignoble end.

XXIV

THE SCOTS GREYS[1]

XXIV. You have done me a great honour in asking me to unveil this memorial, and, if I may say so, you have done a wise thing in erecting it. You have raised to the memory of your comrades a memorial in the Capital of Scotland, under the shadow of Edinburgh Castle, in the noblest street in the world. But, as things are, it must be a memorial not merely to the dead, to those who have fallen, but to that proud and illustrious regiment which you represent, and which, in the inscrutable dispensation of the higher powers, we are so soon to lose for ever from our midst. For the Scots Greys are bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. They were raised, indeed, in these Lowlands of ours under circumstances which do not so much elicit our sympathy as the events of their later history—though they were raised by a Lothian man, Colonel Dalziel of Binns — as they were raised for the purpose of harrying the Covenanters, who represented the backbone of the character and the history of Scotland in the reign of the last two Stuarts.

[1] A Speech delivered at the unveiling of the Memorial to the Scots Greys in Edinburgh, November 16, 1906.

However, they were soon to be called to higher duties than those of civil war. They served gloriously under Marlborough in the Low Countries; they fought all through the wars of the eighteenth century; they captured a standard at Dettingen; and yet the time of their full glory had not yet come. XXIV.

It was at Waterloo that their chance came; it was in that tremendous charge when, with the Inniskillings and the Royals, they rode down masses of French infantry—in that tremendous charge where Sergeant-Major Ewart, one of your non-commissioned officers, wrested an eagle from the French, and cut down successively three gallant Frenchmen who stood to defend it. Later on that day they came to the assistance of a small body of the 92nd Highlanders, and they together, to the cry of "Scotland for Ever," annihilated a greatly superior column of the enemy which was opposed to them. And, again, as the shades of evening drew on, they joined in the unrelenting pursuit of the broken enemy until darkness put an end to the engagement. Surely no regiment ever had a prouder day than that. It need not be fiction, but may well be believed, that Napoleon himself recognised their achievement, and honoured their heroic courage. It is not, then, in vain that to this day, and for all time to come, the Scots Greys bear with them the symbol of the Eagle and the name of Waterloo.

Then they were called to serve in the Crimea. We speak in the presence of a distinguished Russian officer; but the brave honour the brave, and he will allow me to recall, even in his presence,

XXIV. that charge of the Heavy Brigade at Balaclava, partially forgotten in the more startling achievement of the Light Brigade, but still splendid and memorable, when the Heavy Brigade, headed once more by the Scots Greys and the Inniskillings, rode through the dense masses of the enemy. It was at the close of that day that Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde, rode up to the regiment and, with bared head, said to them: "Scots Greys, I am sixty-one, but were I a young man I would ask for nothing better than the honour of serving in your ranks."

Then came the South African War. That was a very different campaign. It was war carried on in vast solitudes, against small bodies of men—against an enemy that was almost always invisible. No more heart-breaking or harassing work for a soldier can be conceived. It afforded no room for the splendid achievements of Waterloo and the Crimea. It required perseverance, patience, and vigilance, almost as much as courage; but is not cold courage—cold-blooded courage prolonged through long years—at least as meritorious as the hot, warm-blooded courage of the onset? The British Army in South Africa fought under harassing conditions. They fought a new warfare; they fought hardship and disease; and they fought under the discouragement of military operations carried on with patience through long years to a tardy but triumphant result.

Gentlemen, I was with the Scots Greys at their last dinner in this city; it was a cheerful dinner, but it was not glad or triumphant. We met under the shadow of a humiliating reverse;

we knew that, humanly speaking, we could not expect that all who were then present would return to us again. We knew at any rate that all were about to face the unknown, and we then resolved and declared that evening that having put our hands to this thing we would see it through; that we would muddle through somehow, and somehow or other we did muddle through. Some of those who were there that night did not return, and it is to their memory that we erect this memorial to-day. XXIV.

Honour to the unreturning brave, the brave who will return no more. We shall not see their faces again. In the service of their Sovereign and their country they have undergone the sharpness of death, and sleep their eternal sleep thousands of miles away in the green solitudes of South Africa. Their places, their comrades, their saddles will know them no more, for they will never return to us as we knew them. But in a nobler and a higher sense, have they not returned to us to-day? They return to us with a message of duty, of courage, of patriotism. They return to us with a memory of high duty faithfully performed. They return to us with the inspiration of their example. Peace, then, to their dust. Honour to their memory. Scotland for ever!

IV

THE SERVICE OF THE STATE

XXV

THE SERVICE OF THE STATE [1]

I am not sure that this sumptuous Hall with which the generous Mr. M'Ewan has endowed this University is in the nature of an unmixed benefit. It makes too much of an occasion like this. To tell the truth, as I look around me and see this vast audience, I am irresistibly reminded of the most dismal moment that can occur in a man's life—the moment when he is about to deliver a Rectorial Address. Happily, there are one or two considerations which reassure me. One is, that the altar is already lighted for another victim, whose sacrifice, in the natural course of things, cannot long be delayed. My other comfort, sir, is that you [2] are in the chair, because, to put it on no higher ground, the Chancellor is never present at a Rector's address. The same firmament cannot hold two such planets, and therefore, when I see you there, I am perfectly certain that the impression I derive from this audience is an erroneous one, and that I am not going to deliver a Rectorial Address. Well, sir, we welcome you here for every reason. We are

[1] Presidential Address to the Associated Societies of the University of Edinburgh, October 25, 1898.

[2] Mr. Arthur Balfour, then Chancellor of the University.

xxv. glad to see you in your place as Chancellor. We are glad to see you on any plea in Edinburgh; and what I am happy to think of is this, that we can ensure you in that chair for the next fifty minutes what, perhaps, you can obtain nowhere else, a period of unbroken repose, untroubled by colleagues, untroubled by Cabinets, undisturbed even by boxes or telegrams; and if you, sir, will take my advice, you will take advantage of that repose.

But if I can explain why the Rector is not here, and why the Chancellor is, it is perhaps more difficult to explain to myself why I am here. It is partly, no doubt, because in an unwary moment I accepted this responsible office, which has such onerous duties. But it is also due to another circumstance, that, when we were last in this Hall, you invited me, somewhat clamorously, to address you. I am a person, however, accustomed to walk in the established order of things: I could not interrupt the programme. It would neither have been *dulce* nor *decorum* for me to speak on that occasion. But to-night I am here to respond to that invitation. To-night, it is perhaps *decorum* that I should speak; and if it can ever be *dulce* to make a speech, it is *dulce* on this occasion. But, at any rate, let us be quite clear in our understanding. I am not going to deliver a Rectorial Address—nothing so elaborate, nothing so educational. Simply, I trust, it will be a short speech on common-sense lines, and without rising to the heights of the other occasion to which I have alluded.

Now, sir, with a view to the adequate per-

formance of my functions to-night, I have been reading the address of my predecessor, our friend Professor Masson, and as I am quite sure that you have all read Professor Masson's address too, it will not be necessary on this occasion to condescend upon details. You know more than I do about the constitution of these Societies, and you may perhaps be able—which I am not—to decide as to their relative antiquity. But there is one sinister and significant sentence in Professor Masson's address to which I commend your attention. He says that for sixteen years the post of President was vacant, because no one could be found willing to accept the responsibility of delivering the presidential address. Now, if that does not move your compassion for the person who has that courage, your hearts must be harder than adamant. There is another sentence which produced a great awe and effect upon my mind. It is said that the Societies had done much good work which did not seem affected materially by the absence or the presence of their President, and, as a specimen of that good work, he said that no less than twenty thousand essays had been delivered to the Societies in the course of their existence. Twenty thousand essays! That is a hard saying. Twenty thousand essays, blown into space! And it leads further to this appalling calculation, that if a gentleman hearing of the Associated Societies had determined to improve his mind by reading these essays, and had determined to read one every day before breakfast, it would have been sixty years before he had accomplished the task. xxv.

xxv. Now, that to me, I confess, is not the precious fact in connection with these Societies. What to me is precious is this, that they garnered up so much of what is illustrious, both in regard to memories and to men in connection with Edinburgh. Take, for example, the Dialectic Society, which was founded in 1787. Well, how brilliant was Edinburgh in 1787! A race was growing up in your Schools and in your Universities which was destined afterwards, through the means of the *Edinburgh Review*, to influence largely both the taste and the policy of these islands. They were at that time pretty young, the most of them. Cockburn—Lord Cockburn—was being flogged every ten days at the High School, every ten days, according to a minute and pathetic calculation that he has left behind him. Jeffrey—Lord Jeffrey—was at that time entering Glasgow University in his fourteenth year; and as for Lord Brougham, he was at that moment commencing a career of conflict by a struggle with a master of his class, in which, I need hardly say, Brougham came off victorious. Dugald Stewart was lecturing at that time, not merely to Edinburgh, but to the kingdom, and almost to the world at large, and Edinburgh was the centre to which all the intellect of Great Britain might, without exaggeration, be said to have gravitated. At that time the English universities were slumbering. Jeffrey had indeed taken a taste of Oxford, but liked it not. His biographer carefully says that "his College was not distinguished by study and propriety alone." This shocked Jeffrey, and he left it.

These were the golden days of Edinburgh. It was then unrivalled as an intellectual centre, unrivalled in a sense that it can never be again. Some will say that all that is gone. Well, as for the intellectual supremacy, that could not survive in the general awakening of the world. But what I also fear has gone is the resident, inherent originality which then distinguished our city. Railways and the Press have made that impossible; for, after all, true originality can scarcely exist but in the backwaters of life. The great ocean of life smooths and rolls its pebbles to too much the same shape and texture. Those famous judges of whom we read, with something between a smile and a tear—Braxfield and Eskgrove and Newton and Hermand—are just as impossible in these days as the black bottles with which they stimulated their judicial attention on the bench. They are as impossible as that cry of "Gardez-loo," which meant so much to the passer-by on the streets. Well, after all, we must take the rough with the smooth, and the good with the bad. "Gardez-loo" itself was only the symbol of hideous physical impurities, which we none of us should regret; and perhaps even some of those social glories over which we are so accustomed to gloat in the past, might not have been entirely agreeable had we to realise them in the present. Take these old judges whom I mentioned. They are very picturesque and interesting figures; but I am not sure that any of us could have faced them in the character of a defendant or an accused person without a qualm, more especially if we were opposed to them in

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xxv. politics, and even—if tradition lies not—even if we were their opponents at chess. And if we were in that unfortunate and perhaps discreditable position, we should go and seek our legal adviser, not, as now, in the decorous recesses of Queen Street or of George Street, but, as Colonel Mannering went to seek him, at Clerihugh's, enjoying "high jinks" in the midst of a carousal, from which he could hardly tear himself for matters of the most vital import to his client.

Well, of course it is impossible to read Lord Cockburn's *Memorials of His Time*—and I hope that you all do read it, and read it at least once a year, because no resident of Edinburgh can properly enjoy his city without reading Lord Cockburn once a year—it is impossible to read Lord Cockburn without seeing that he was an optimist. But even he says of the Edinburgh of his time—which he says was so unrivalled—even he describes it as "always thirsty and unwashed." Well, I am not quite sure when I read that description if we should have thought the Edinburgh of 1787 as delightful as he did. I hardly venture to risk myself in this line of conjecture. Should we all have appreciated Jeffrey as much as he did? That must remain in the realms of the unknowable and the unknown. But there is worse behind. There is even treason talked about the divine Sir Walter Scott. In that very delightful book which furnishes so much leisurely reading for the Scotsman or the Scotswoman, or for anybody—I mean *Memoirs of a Highland Lady*—I came upon this sentence, which I have never since been able to

digest. It says about Sir Walter Scott: "He went out very little," and when he did go, that "he was not an agreeable gentleman, sitting very silent, looking dull and listless unless an occasional flash lit up his countenance. It was odd, but Sir Walter never had the reputation in Edinburgh that he had elsewhere." I veil my face; I cannot get over that, till I remember that a prophet is never a prophet in his own country, and there may have been people, even in Edinburgh, who did not think of Sir Walter as we do. But I do not mention all these disagreeable considerations as sheer iconoclasm and blasphemy. No, it is in a very different spirit that I lay them before you. I lay them before you as with a sort of inward groan. They are to me a philosophic potsherd with which I scrape myself. It is in the attempt to comfort myself for living in the Edinburgh of the end of the nineteenth century, and not in the Edinburgh of the eighteenth or the seventeenth or the sixteenth century, that thus I endeavour to recall these things, and console myself anew. XXV.

Well, I think, then, there are some circumstances which we should bear in mind before we give way to the wish to exchange new Edinburgh for old Edinburgh. At any rate, there are some circumstances that should discount our enthusiasm. But, indeed, in any case it would not be possible for us of the Associated Societies to concentrate all our interest in Edinburgh as our forefathers did. In the first place, our students, our members, are by no means all Scotsmen. They come from England, and from all over the

xxv. world. They come here, many of them, to learn arts which they mean to practise and to exercise elsewhere, so that it would be impossible for them to remain in Edinburgh ; if they did, indeed, I think that some professions in Edinburgh would be somewhat glutted and overstocked. But, in the second place, there is the railroad, which equally prevents it—the railroad, which has so profoundly stirred up our people, which has so inspired them with the fever of travel, makes concentration in our old capital impossible. By thousands are to be computed the strangers that it brings in and takes out of Edinburgh every day ; and indeed, as regards its effect on our town, it is something like that of the pipes which convey the water of some hushed and inland loch away to the boisterous strife of cities, and again away from the cities to the eternal ocean. The students of that Edinburgh which was once so difficult to reach and to leave are now whirled away into a thousand whirlpools of civilisation ; they can no longer huddle around and try to blow up the embers of that ancient Edinburgh which we can only revive in imagination. But of Edinburgh as it exists —the historical, the beautiful, the inspiring— I trust they have taken and are taking a deep draught and a long memory. They are here at the most critical and the most fruitful period of their lives ; and sure am I that, whether they wish it or not, they will bear away from this place a seal and a mark and a stamp which can leave them only with life itself.

But I go a little farther in this sense, and I believe that, even if the students could remain in

Edinburgh and concentrate themselves here, it would be bad for Edinburgh and bad for Scotland, but bad also for the Empire. We in Scotland wish to continue to mould the Empire as we have in the past—and we have not moulded it by stopping at home. Your venerable Principal is an instance in point. And we have even a nearer object-lesson in two returning Viceroys from Canada and from India: Aberdeen from Canada, where he is by and by to be replaced by a Minto, and Elgin—the second Elgin—from India. Well, I say, then, that it is not the Edinburgh of Cockburn alone that I wish you to bear in your thoughts to-night, but rather the Edinburgh which has dispersed her sons all over the Empire, the assiduous mother and foster-mother of the builders of our Empire. From the time of Dundas, who almost populated India with Scotsmen, that has always been the function of Scotland; and I look, then, to my colleagues of the Associated Societies not merely as going forth to their several professions and callings in life, but as going forth as potential Empire-builders, or at least as Empire-maintainers. XXV.

You will, when you go forth from these learned precincts and enter upon the actual business of life—you will have in the course of your lives to help to maintain and to build that Empire. You may think that it may be in a small and insignificant manner, not more than the coral insect within the coral reef. But recollect that the insect is essential to the reef; and it is not for any man of himself to measure what his direct utility may be to his country. I will tell you why you

xxv. must in your way exercise those functions. The British Empire is not a centralised empire. It does not, as other empires, hinge on a single autocrat or even on a single parliament, but it is a vast collection of communities spread all over the world, many with their own legislatures, but all with their own governments, and, therefore, resting, in a degree which is known in no other state of which history has record, on the intelligence and the character of the individuals who compose it. Some empires have rested on armies, and some on constitutions. It is the boast of the British Empire that it rests on men. For that reason it is that I speak to you to-night as men who are to have your share in the work of the Empire, small or great, humble or proud. That is—unless you go absolutely downwards—your irresistible and irrevocable function.

Now, it is quite true that your share in that work may not be official, but even then I would ask, why not? There never was in the history of Great Britain, or, I suspect, of the world, so great a call as now upon the energies and intelligence of men for the public service, and that call, as you, sir, know, is increasing daily. Within Great Britain in my own memory the change in that respect has been very remarkable. What was called the governing class—and which is to some extent the governing class still—when I was a boy had very simple public functions in comparison with those which devolve upon the present race. They went into Parliament as a rule, and they had quarter sessions. But Parliament in those days was a very different business

from what it is now, and quarter sessions—were quarter sessions. The burden of Parliament has now indefinitely and almost hopelessly increased, as you, sir, I doubt not, would be willing to depose on oath, if necessary. That takes up for these islands some five hundred and seventy more or less trained intelligences. Then there is the House of Lords, which takes up some—I am not sure of the figures—some five or six hundred more. I do not wish to claim that the House of Lords takes up the whole time of its members; I merely wish to point out that that, again, takes a part of the time, at any rate, of some five or six hundred more of our governing class. Then there is a new institution—the London County Council. That is a body whose work is not less absorbing than that of the House of Commons. It lasts much longer; it is much more continuous, and, though not nearly so obtrusive, it is quite as arduous. Well, that consists of a small body of a hundred and thirty-eight members, who must all, who should all, be highly qualified for the function of governing a nation which is not smaller than many self-governing kingdoms. Then there are the municipalities—great and small. These, no doubt, have to some extent always existed, but not in their present form. A new spirit has been breathed into these somewhat dry bones. The functions of a municipality are sought by men of the highest intelligence; they are not merely sought by men of the highest intelligence, but absorb a very great proportion of the time of these men. They are changed altogether in spirit and in extent. And it is notable now to

xxv. remark how many men in business plead as a just excuse from entering either the House of Commons or municipal work that they cannot spare the time from the necessary prosecution of their business which would enable them to join in those absorbing avocations.

The municipalities of to-day—I know not how many men whose time they absorb—but they are very different from the municipalities of my boyhood, and I suspect that if a town councillor of forty or fifty years ago were to present himself in a town council of to-day, he would regard their work with astonishment, and they perhaps might look at him with some surprise. Then there are county councils, district councils, parish councils—all bodies new within the last few years—not all of them absorbing the whole time of their members, but requiring, at any rate, the services of many trained intelligences to keep their work in proper order and without arrears. Then there are the Government departments, which swallow up more and more men, and pass them on very often to higher employments. Their work is indefinitely and incalculably increasing. I will give you one symptom. The Foreign Office this year has obtained one new Under-Secretary; and the addition of an Under-Secretary is a cry of distress indeed. Well, the Colonial Office, I see from the papers, is also about to demand an Under-Secretary, and what that means of increase in the subordinate departments is more than I can rightly calculate. But in truth, the whole matter is typified in the constitution of the Cabinet. The present Cabinet

requires nineteen men to do what was done by half-a-dozen in the days of Mr. Pitt. xxv.

Why do I quote these figures? I quote them to show the enormous drain that the State makes on our intelligent population, besides the drain that it makes both for military and naval purposes. Napoleon was said to drain his population for his warlike purposes. We may be said, if not to drain, at least to skim ours very frequently for the purposes of administration. Now what I have been telling you relates to Great Britain alone. There is, besides, Ireland. Well, I am not going to touch on Ireland. In the first place, it is a different system of administration, and one with which I am not so conversant; and, in the second place, this is at present a harmonious meeting, and I have discovered that there is no topic so likely to terminate the harmony of a meeting as that of the administration or the government of Ireland. I pass beyond that. Outside Great Britain and Ireland there is an enormous drain on our population for administrative purposes. There is India, which takes so many of our young men, and trains them so incomparably well for every sort of administrative work. There is Egypt, which is, of course, on a different footing, but which is also very large in her requirements. There is Africa—not self-governing Africa, but the rest of our Africa, with its territories, its spheres of influence, and so on, all requiring men to mould them into shape, not necessarily men belonging to the Civil Service or men of formula, but muscular Christians, who are ready to turn their hands to

xxv. anything. Then, besides that and beyond that, there are the outer Britains, if I may so call them, the great commonwealths outside these islands which own the British Crown—whether crown colonies, in which case they require administrators, or self-governing colonies, in which case they require the whole appurtenance of parliament, courts of law, ministers, and so forth. Then, outside that again, there are our diplomatic and consular services. I do not suppose there ever was in the history of the world half the demand that there is at this hour within the British Empire for young men of ability and skill and training to help to mould that Empire into shape. Never were there so many paths of distinction open within that Empire; while to those who would share in that task of Empire-building, and who would do it, not with the hope of amassing much riches, but in a high missionary spirit, never was there such an opportunity as opens at the present moment.

Of course, the base of all this tremendous work of government is our unparalleled civil service. Our civil service is our glory and our pride. It is the admiration of all foreigners who see it, but it is—and I think I can appeal to you, sir—it is much more the admiration of those who, as political Ministers, are called upon to witness its working from within. They constitute the wheels and the springs on which moves the great Juggernaut car of the State, and if these were once to get out of order, it would be an evil day indeed for Great Britain. But I confess, in my day-dreams, I have sometimes

wished to add to them one other department. I have sometimes wished that there was a department entirely devoted to training young men for the task of administration—men who would afterwards be ready to go anywhere and do anything at a moment's notice—be ready to go out and administer Uganda, for example, at a week's notice, ready to go and report anywhere on maladministration with the skill of an expert, able to investigate any subject and report upon it, not in the sense of Royal Commissions, but in a summary and a business-like manner. I should like them, as I say, to go at a word from their superior to any part of the Empire, and be able to do anything, as the militant orders of monasticism used to do—and do now, for aught I know—at the command of their superiors; to be, in fact, a sort of general staff of the Empire. I believe if that could be done it would be an incalculable gain; though I know it is a dream. But then I also know that it is not a bad thing sometimes to dream dreams. XXV.

Of course, to some extent this function is performed by the Treasury. The Treasury, from its necessary contact with all the other departments, owing to its being alone able to furnish them with that financial staff of life without which they could not get on, a staff of life which can only—not always with a smile—be obtained from the Treasury, does furnish to the other departments men who are competent to do most things, and to undertake most duties. But that, unfortunately, has been already discovered. Already men have been constantly

xxv. taken from the Treasury, and if that process be continued much longer that department will, I fear, be left in what I believe is scientifically called an anaemic condition. I admit that this is a digression as well as a dream, but my point is this, that there never was so great a demand as now for trained intelligence and trained character in our public service, and I should like to think that we of the Associated Societies will bear our part in it.

Most of you, I suppose, have already chosen the professions that you mean to pursue, and I should by no means wish to see, as the result of what I have said, a general exodus from Edinburgh to the somewhat forbidding portals of the civil service examiners. That is not my object, but I venture to point out that official duty is only a very small part of public duty, and that public work is by no means incompatible with other professions and other callings. I do not suppose I need remind you that Walter Scott was a sheriff, and that Robert Burns was an exciseman. But how often have I seen professional men clutch at an opportunity of serving their country, whether on a commission or on a committee, or something of that kind—clutch at it though knowing that it will involve a great waste of time, and therefore a great loss of money—clutch at it as an honour which they cannot sufficiently prize. And I confess, when I see the enormous abilities that are given to our civil service and to our public service, either for no remuneration at all, or for remuneration incalculably smaller than the same abilities would have

earned in any other calling or profession, I am inclined to think that the public spirit in this country was never higher nor brighter than it is at present. xxv.

Let me tell you two curious stories which happened within my experience or knowledge with regard to this anxiety to serve the public. A friend of mine who had a high post in the civil service was asked, not so very long ago, to undertake some task which was peculiarly congenial to him, and for which he was peculiarly fitted; but he refused it without hesitation, and he gave as his reason this. He said: "When I was appointed to my present post at a very ample remuneration I knew nothing of the work, and it was some years before I could learn the work, to do it to my satisfaction. Now I have learned it, I am in a position in some way to repay the State for what it has done for me, and I shall not leave my post till I feel I have in some degree discharged that debt." Well, now, a much longer time ago, before I can remember, there was one of the greatest and the wealthiest, and at the same time one of the most dissipated of the English nobility, who, after a life spent, as I say, in a very frivolous manner, was suddenly seized and bitten with the anxiety to occupy some public post under his Government and do some public work; and he applied to the Minister of the day for some quite subordinate post, as he wished to do something to redeem his life. Well, the post was refused, and his life was unredeemed. I give that to you as a specimen, not so uncommon as it may seem, of the anxiety of men,

xxv. who had not done much in their youth, as they approached middle life to be of some use to their country before they die.

And, after all, we are bound to remember this—that we owe something to our country besides rates and taxes. Other countries have compulsory military service. We are released from that; and if only on that consideration I think that we should be prepared to do something for the country which has done so much for us. And even if there is no public work ready to your hand, there are innumerable ways in which we can serve our country, however humbly and however indirectly. I only mention in passing the Volunteer movement. But there are social methods, literary methods, ay, and even athletic methods, because I am one of those who believe that one of the subordinate methods of welding the Empire together, and even of welding the English-speaking races together, is by those inter-colonial athletic contests, and athletic contests with the United States, which are developing so much in these days. But what I want to impress upon you is this, that if you keep before you the high motive of serving your country, it will ennoble the humblest acts that you do for her. The man who breaks stones on the road, after all, is serving his country in some way. He is making her roads better for her commerce and her traffic. And if a man asks himself sincerely and constantly the question, "What can I do, in however small a way, to serve my country?" he will not be long in finding an answer.

Now, I will tell you what I consider the irreducible minimum of this service—the irreducible minimum. It is that you should keep a close and vigilant eye on public and municipal affairs ; that you should form intelligent opinions upon them ; that you should give help to the men who seem to you worthy of help, and oppose the men whom you think worthy of opposition and condemnation. That I believe to be the irreducible minimum of the debt of a British citizen to his country, and I believe it to be very important to the country. There is no such bad sign in a country as political abstention. I do not want you all to be militant politicians ; I do not want it for your sake, or for the country's sake. But an intelligent interest does not mean a militant interest, though it, at any rate, means the reversal of apathy. We are told that there is a good deal of political apathy in these days. I do not know whether that is so or not, because I have no means of judging ; but if there is political apathy, I think the cause of it is not far to seek. Our forefathers, with their defective news agencies or channels, were able to concentrate their mind on one particular subject at a time, and give it all their energy and all their zeal. For example, for some twenty years they were locked in that great war with Napoleon and the French Revolution which absorbed all their energies, and when that war ceased there came an era of great single questions, on which they were able to concentrate all their attention. But now that is all changed. The telegraph brings you into communication with every quarter of the

XXV.

xxv. globe. Every day brings you news of some exciting character from every quarter of the universe, and under this constant and varying pressure the intelligence of men is apt to be dazed, and blunted, and dulled. And yet we know that when, as now, the attention of the country is concentrated on a single point, there is as little apathy as need be.

But I should not appeal even on these grounds to you if I did not hold a somewhat higher and broader conception of the Empire than seems to be held in many quarters. If I regarded the Empire simply as a means of painting so much of the world red, or as an emporium for trade, I should not ask you to work for it. The land hunger is apt to become land fever, and land fever is apt to breed land indigestion, while trade, however important and desirable in itself, can never be the sole foundation of an empire. Empires founded on trade alone must irresistibly crumble. But the Empire that is sacred to me is sacred for this reason, that I believe it to be the noblest example yet known to mankind of free, adaptable, just government. If that was only your or my opinion it might perhaps be not very well worth having, but it derives singular confirmation from outside. When a community is in distress or under oppression, it always looks first to Great Britain; while in cases which are quite unsuspected, I think, by Great Britain at large, and which are, as a rule, only known to Ministers, they constantly express the wish in some form or other to be united to our country, and to enjoy our government. And, on the

other hand, for the most part, in those territories which, for one reason or another, we have at various times ceded, we may, I think, in almost every case see signs of deterioration, and signs of regret on the part of the inhabitants for what they have lost. XXV.

I ask you, then, to keep this motive before you of public duty and public service, for the sake of the Empire, and also on your own account. You will find it, I believe, the most ennobling human motive that can guide your actions. And while you will help the country by observing it, you will also help yourselves. Life in itself is but a poor thing at best; it consists of only two certain parts, the beginning and the end—the birth and the grave. Between those two points lies the whole area of human choice and human opportunity. You may embellish and consecrate it if you will, or you may let it lie stagnant and dead. But if you choose the better part, I believe that nothing will give your life so high a complexion as to study to do something for your country. And with that inspiration I would ask you to blend some memory of this Edinburgh so sacred and so beautiful to us, not, perhaps, the Edinburgh of Cockburn or Jeffrey or Brougham, but an Edinburgh yet full of noble men and wise teachers, that you will bear away some kindling memory of this old grey city, which, though it be not the capital of the Empire, is yet, in the sense of the sacrifices that it has made and the generations of men that it has given to the Empire, in the truest, the largest, and the highest sense an Imperial City.

XXVI

STATESMEN AND BOOKMEN[1]

XXVI. It is difficult for me to avoid a certain feeling of sadness in standing here to-night, for it is twenty-seven years since I last delivered an Inaugural Address to the Philosophical Institution.[2] Twenty-seven years is a long time—much has happened since then—many have gone and all are changed. In the chair was the venerable and sagacious form of Lord Colonsay, who looked as wise as Thurlow, and was probably much wiser. What a formidable listener I felt him, with his prodigious white hair and bushy white eyebrows. Few prisoners in the dock can have gazed on him with more apprehension than I on that night. Then there was Blackie; we shall miss to-night the genial calls for a speech from him, and the not less genial response; there were Sir George Harvey, the kindly President of our Academy; Mr. Gordon, twice Lord Advocate and then Lord of Appeal; the gentle and venerable Sir William Gibson-Craig; Dr. Matthews Duncan, whose rugged manner veiled so warm a heart; George Harrison, the memory of whose excellence sur-

[1] Presidential Address delivered to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, November 25, 1898.

[2] See p. 71.

vives, among the best of our Lord Provosts; last and not least, the uncle and second father I so lately lost—so well known and loved in Edinburgh —the warm friend of this Institution—Bouverie Primrose. All these familiar faces which encouraged me in 1871 will not be on this platform to-night. We shall miss, too, the face of another friend, also a hearty supporter of this Institution —I mean John Ritchie Findlay. Edinburgh can scarcely have had a citizen of more truly public spirit: we shall long miss him—never more than here. XXVI.

It is, then, with a necessary sadness that I speak to-night after so long an interval. That is not the only reason which makes it difficult for me to thank you, as I could wish, for the honour you have done me in electing me as your President. For I stand in the fifty-second year of your Institution as seventh on an illustrious roll. It begins with Adam Black, a great citizen and servant of Edinburgh. Then comes the brilliant and wayward Christopher North. Third there comes Macaulay in the glory of the second instalment of his *History*. He was succeeded by Brougham, then in the commencement of decline, who was followed by Carlyle, whose connection with Edinburgh was so signal and pathetic. Then in 1881 you chose my immediate predecessor Mr. Gladstone, who had just in a scene of matchless enthusiasm renewed, as it were, his foothold in Edinburgh.

It makes me blush to record these names and to stand in the place of these men. But as Time and Death make havoc in the ranks of mankind,

XXVI. we cannot pretend to fill the gaps: we can only close them and move on. My impression, however, is that, of your Presidents, the most illustrious have only been names to you. At least during the thirty years that represent my life as your neighbour, I can recall no President of your Institution who has taken part in its proceedings. I speak under correction, and I do not forget that Macaulay made his famous speech in 1846 on the literature of Great Britain, at a meeting of this Institution. But he was not then President, while the occasion appears to have been a convivial one, and not as now a mere feast of reason.

You have taken a new and dangerous course in electing the man on the spot, for in such a case you may have taken King Stork instead of King Log. I promise you I offer no such danger. But suppose it had been Brougham, one of my predecessors, who had lived at Dalmeny during his presidency. He was capable each year, not merely of delivering the inaugural address, but the entire course of lectures, and I verily believe that had he been challenged, he would have insisted on doing so.

Mr. Gladstone, too, could have done the same thing. He could have proffered at once, as the great attraction, a course of lectures on Homer; and with scarcely less of zest a course of lectures on Dante. But after these were exhausted, if indeed his lore and enthusiasm with respect to those subjects could ever have been exhausted, he could have given the entire course, on subject after subject, for winter after winter, with ever-fresh knowledge and fire, and the audiences would

have packed the hall night after night, almost indifferent to the topic so long as they could watch the inexhaustible play of his features and listen to the matchless melody of his voice.

You will gather from these words that I regard Mr. Gladstone as the ideal President of this Institution; that is, had he been able to devote himself as a country neighbour to your business. That may seem small praise for one who held so commanding a place in the British Empire and the world at large. But I am only speaking of one Mr. Gladstone—there were a hundred Mr. Gladstones.

Mr. Gladstone would have been an ideal President for you, if only in the character of the constant lover and explorer of books. For I take it to be a fact beyond contradiction that Mr. Gladstone was one of the most bookish statesmen that ever lived. Or rather, to put it differently and more accurately, no one ever attained such eminence as a statesman who was essentially so bookish a man. Sir George Cornewall Lewis was not less bookish perhaps, but he never stood on or approached Mr. Gladstone's pinnacle. He was, too, more of a book-lover and book-writer than of a statesman: sound and sagacious as was his political judgement, admirable as are his published works, he will stand higher in the field of letters than in that of practical politics.

Then there is Macaulay, one of your Presidents. On his Herculean feats as a man of books I dare not dwell; I would rather give you the pleasure of reading them in his fascinating biography by his brilliant nephew. Macaulay seems to have

XXVI. reached his climax in India. On his voyage out he had read, he says, "insatiably, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil, Horace, Caesar's *Commentaries*, Bacon *De Augmentis*, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, *Don Quixote*, Gibbon's *Rome*, Mill's *India*, all the seventy volumes of Voltaire, Sismondi's *History of France*, and the seven thick volumes of the *Biographia Britannica*." And again, in another account, he says: "I devoured Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, French, and English; folios, quartos, octavos, and duodecimos." And after his arrival he sums it all up by saying: "Books are becoming everything to me. If I had at this moment my choice of life, I would bury myself in one of those immense libraries that we saw together at the universities, and never pass a waking hour without a book before me." There speaks the true man of books. But unluckily Macaulay does not help us with a parallel, for in him the political side, gorgeous as were his speeches, is obscured by the literary, and it is safe to say that few of the readers of to-day, as they pore spellbound over the *Essays* and the *History*, know or recollect that their author was a Cabinet Minister.

Bookishness and statesmanship are, one would think, scarcely compatible. Nothing, indeed, could seem more discordant and incompatible than the life of the library and the life of politics. The man of books may steal through life like a shadow, happy with his simple pleasures, like a caterpillar on a broad green leaf, untortured by the travail of authorship or the candour of the critic, and leave it with his name unknown, until

his library be sold, should he perchance have books to sell. XXVI.

The man of politics leads possibly a more useful, certainly a more arduous career. He lives in the public eye, almost in the public grasp. Out of doors there is the reporter; in the seclusion of his home there is the interviewer, both presumably hungry to receive the ideas as they pass through his capacious brain—though some go so far as to declare that the interviewer and the reporter are less the seekers than the sought, less the pursuers than the pursued. Alert, bustling, visible, deriving even a certain popularity from the fact of being known by sight; speaking to his engagements, whether he has anything to say or whether he has not; appearing on his platform, whether he be brisk and well, or sick and sorry—like an actor, only that he has to find his own words; bringing together and keeping together, as well as may be, all sorts and conditions of men; with one eye apparently on the political weather, and the other, it is to be hoped, on his political conscience, which, by the bye, is usually kept for him by a number of other people—a hurricane of a life, the essential quality of which is publicity. I speak, it is to be observed, only of obvious externals, and only enough of these to indicate the natural antipathy between the life of politics and the life of books.

And yet Mr. Gladstone, who rode the whirlwind and directed the storm of politics, was bookish to an extreme degree. He had not indeed reached the superlative and morbid form of bookishness, when a man is called a bookworm.

XXVI. The fresh breezes of a thousand active interests prevented such a development. But with encouragement and fostering circumstance, had he been nurtured in literary traditions like his great rival, had his health been feeble, it is not difficult to imagine him a bookworm, immersed in folios, a *helluo librorum*.

But as things were, he loved books as much as a man may without a suspicion of bibliomania. As a matter of fact he had none of what is technically called bibliomania about him; to first editions or broad margins or vellum copies he was indifferent. But had he been a very wealthy man, even this form of the noble disease might have taken him. As it was, he loved collecting, buying, handling books. It was a joy to him to arrange with his own hands the books in the library he had founded in memory of St. Deiniol. It was a sport to him to hunt down books in sale-catalogues. It was a sacred trust to him to preserve the little treasures of his youth, a classic or two that he had at Eton, the book given to him by Hannah More.

No one could have seen him reading in the Temple of Peace, as he significantly called his study, and have deemed it possible for him to be happy in any other capacity. Those who had witnessed that sight must have felt persuaded that, when he retired from public life in 1875, nothing could ever draw him from his beloved retreat. They might well have anticipated that with old books, old friends, old trees, with a hundred avenues of study to complete or explore, with a vast experience of life and affairs to dis-

cuss, with trees to cut and plant and worship— for he was a tree-worshipper as well—and above all, with the vital care and responsibility of a living faith pervading him, he might well rest and be thankful. XXVI.

All this might have been safe enough to predict of an ordinary or even remarkable man. But Mr. Gladstone was a great deal more than a remarkable man; he was a number of remarkable men. And as soon as he heard the clash of a conflict, in which he saw, or thought he saw, the righteous fighting the unrighteous, the fighting Gladstone could not restrain himself, and left his tent for the battle, taking the bookish Gladstone somewhat reluctantly with him.

It was, then, his extraordinary energy, enthusiasm, and faith in great causes that were the salt that prevented his stagnation into mere bookishness. But he had another safeguard still. It was his principle in reading to make his exports balance his imports—he took in a great deal, but he put forth a great deal. His close study of a book was pretty sure to precede an article on that book. It was impossible for him under this principle to sink into the mere passive and receptive reader. I remember, too, his applying it in conversation to an ecclesiastical statesman for whom he had a real admiration. "I dare say," he remarked in answer to some disparaging criticism as to thinness of matter, "I dare say that as he has to speak so often, he has to put forth more than he can take in to replace his output." I do not doubt, then, that his principle of balancing exports and imports would have kept his mind

XXVI. active, even had it not possessed other animating and quickening principles.

I reckon over all this to explain, so far as I can explain, the paradox of a bookish statesman, of a bookman (to use the old expression), who was at the same time a man of practical business and affairs—one of the rarest of all combinations.

Let us test this assertion by instances: let us take the case of Prime Ministers as an average representation of men of affairs. If you glance roughly over the Prime Ministers since the beginning of the last century, you will find Harley as a book-lover, but even he was rather a collector than a reader, and can hardly be called an eminent statesman. Bolingbroke, who was perhaps Prime Minister for a few hours, was a book-lover after his fall, or said he was. But in his days of office and youth and frankness, though he came a brilliant scholar from Eton, he cannot have much consorted with books. Stanhope had a library which still exists intact at Chevening, preserved in a separate room, a priceless example of the book collection of a Minister in the early eighteenth century. Sunderland founded a great library, mainly, I think, of editions of the classics, which went from Althorp to Blenheim with the elder branch, and was afterwards replaced at Althorp by an even nobler collection.

Then we come to Walpole. The sublime solace of books, which soothed even the gnawing ambition of his fiercest enemy, was denied to him. No one deplored this after his resignation more than himself. Once on finding a friend reading

in his own library at Houghton he expressed this feeling. "I wish," he said, "I took as much delight in reading as you do; it would be the means of alleviating many tedious hours in my present retirement; but to my misfortune I derive no pleasure from such pursuits." And again in the same room he said to Henry Fox: "You can read. It is a great happiness. I totally neglected it when I was in business, which has been the whole of my life, and to such a degree that I cannot now read a page—a warning to all Ministers." And for his neglect of one branch of literature, he gave one pregnant and famous reason: "Do not read history, for that I know must be false." But he found in his country retirement one resource which he shared with Mr. Gladstone, who had all or nearly all the resources, for both statesmen delighted in trees. "My flatterers," wrote Walpole in a passage of such pathetic beauty that one can scarcely credit his deficiency of literary taste, "my flatterers are all mutes. The oaks, the beeches, the chestnuts, seem to contend which shall best please the lord of the manor. They cannot deceive, they will not lie." The tree was as living to Gladstone as to Walpole, but with him it was only one of innumerable living interests. XXVI.

From Walpole onwards we meet with no bookish Prime Minister till we get to Lord Grenville. He was, no doubt, a man of strong literary tastes, but does not come into competition with Mr. Gladstone as an omnivorous reader, much less with the eminence, fulness, and energy of Mr. Gladstone's public life. But a friend who used

XXVI. to visit him gives a picture of his old age, sitting summer and winter on the same sofa with his favourite books on the shelves just over his head —Roger Ascham among them; Milton always within reach. He, at any rate, in his 66th year was clear as to the choice between literature and politics. A Minister leaves him to go to his office. "I would rather he was there than I," says Grenville. "If I was to live my life over again," he continued with a sigh, "I should do very differently."

The next possibly bookish Prime Minister was Canning; but, with a literary side all his life, he was only Prime Minister for a few months. Beyond Canning I hardly dare to go. Melbourne, indeed, was a great reader, and, like Mr. Gladstone, a great reader of theology; but he left behind him a library of odd volumes, which puts him out of the category of book-lovers. Sir Robert Peel, like some of the statesmen of the last century, came to the business of politics as a brilliant specimen of Oxford scholarship. Lord John Russell was perhaps more a writer than a reader of books. The only book, I think, mentioned by Lord Palmerston in his correspondence is *Coningsby*. Then we come to the author of *Coningsby*, "born," as he says, "in a library," more bookish perhaps than Mr. Gladstone in early, and less in later life. But all this is dangerous ground; we are passing from the land of shadows into actual life; I know not where to stop. Once, when I was a child, I was taken to see Hatfield. In the library we saw a tall thin figure carrying a huge volume. The housekeeper

paused with awe, saying, "That is Lord Robert Cecil." It was a bookish figure, then outside politics, but now Prime Minister. XXVI.

I turn my face briskly from the alluring present to the prudent past. Shall we find outside the list of Prime Ministers many in the secure latitudes of the past who compete with Mr. Gladstone, as being bookish men in high Ministerial office? Clarendon is beyond my horizon. But there is, of course, Addison, who was a Secretary of State, but so indifferent a one as to fail entirely in one point of comparison. There is Bolingbroke, to whom I have already alluded, and who would require a volume to himself. There is Burke, a mighty force in politics and in letters, but never in such office as to demonstrate himself a great Minister; any more than Charles James Fox, who held office for too short a time. But Charles Fox had a real passion for literature, could talk of it the whole day and over the whole range of it. He, I think, in a real love of books approaches most nearly to Mr. Gladstone, and both had a common devotion to Homer. Homer was the author that Charles Fox most loved to read—but he would also read all the novels that he could get hold of. In conversation he would range over almost the whole field of literature with zest and passion, and without apparently once straying into politics. A friend has recorded how in a day he would discuss Homer and Virgil, Aeschylus and Euripides, Milton and Massinger, Pope and Addison, Gibbon and Blackstone, Sophocles and Shakespeare, Metastasio, Congreve and Vanbrugh, Cowper, Fielding and Burns. He

XXVI. almost convinces himself that Burns is a better poet than Cowper. But he concludes by saying finely enough that poetry is the great refreshment of the human mind. No one surely can deny that Fox was a man of books.

But he is not a parallel for the combination which in Mr. Gladstone was unique, in that he was only a Minister for a few months; once under circumstances dubious, if not sinister, and once when he was dying. He was not then, as my predecessor was, carrying on simultaneously on parallel lines a great career as a statesman in office and a delightful life in a library. Moreover, all this, except in the case of his *History of James II.* which slumbers on our shelves in majestic quarto, was without any result. Nor was there in him, as I read him, the passionate concentration and practical application of reading that we saw in Mr. Gladstone. "His favourite Sultana Queen," as with his Royal ancestor, "was sauntering," and sauntering was abhorrent and impossible to Mr. Gladstone. Charles Fox, at any rate, after ruining himself at cards, could sit down and derive an instant solace from Theocritus. And indeed, as a rule, the public men of the last century seem to have been fairly well equipped in what Captain Dugald Dalgetty called "the humanities"; they would have blushed not to understand, or not to appear to understand, a Latin quotation; they could bandy and bet over them as Pulteney did with Walpole, but they do not seem to have been men of books. There are perhaps two signal exceptions, statesmen of eminence and power in

the first rank, who were also men of books, and I do not feel perfectly sure even of one of these two; I mean Carteret and Chesterfield. XXVI.

The great exemplar in the eighteenth century of the combination of literature and politics was undoubtedly Chesterfield. Perhaps, indeed, the only startling deficiency in his intellectual equipment was his unaccountable ignorance of the mother tongue of that Hanoverian dynasty which he was so anxious to serve. There his rival Carteret had the advantage of him, and it was not slight. But Carteret never pretended to, or indeed would have cared for, the sovereignty in the literary world that was occupied by Chesterfield. And, moreover, their habits were very different. One loved cards, and the other wine. But it was the delight of Chesterfield to combine his gambling with polite society, until deafness excluded him altogether from conversation.

Carteret, on the other hand, kept a large, plain, hospitable table, where Burgundy flowed freely. He was, however, the best Greek scholar of his age. He had left Christ Church with a rich store of classical learning. To this he added a consummate knowledge, not merely of modern politics, but of modern languages. He is said to have been at his ease in French, Spanish, Italian, German, Swedish, and Portuguese. But he seems always to have been faithful to his first love of the classics. On his deathbed, indeed, he repeated with sonorous emphasis six lines from the twenty-second Book of the *Iliad*, for he, scarcely less than Mr. Gladstone, worshipped and cherished Homer. "Ah, friend," he said in the words of Sarpedon

XXVI. (I quote from Mr. Andrew Lang's translation), "ah, friend, if, once escaped from this battle, we were for ever to be ageless and immortal, neither would I fight myself in the foremost ranks, nor would I send thee into the war that giveth men reason; but now—for assuredly ten thousand fates of death do every way beset us, and these no mortal may escape nor avoid—now let us go forward."

There is something sublime in the dying statesman's signing his last papers with these words on his lips; it is in the old grand style, and we may infer perhaps that the thoughts of his old age were those of Grenville, and that he repented him of the choice that he had made. But words spoken in sickness can scarcely represent the judgement or passion of the man entering life. Carteret's was too ardent a spirit to refrain from active and even fiery ambition. It would be tempting to draw his character, one of the most interesting of his century. But that would be outside my compass; I am only asserting his character as a man of learning and a man of affairs. Of absolute bookishness he was strongly suspected, and classics were to be found, it was said, in his dressing-room. But I am content to make the claim that he was eminently and concurrently a scholar and a statesman.

It is perhaps difficult to understand on what claim or merit was based Chesterfield's literary throne. That he occupied one is sufficiently evident from the fact that Johnson, who was no courtier, had thought of dedicating his Dictionary to him. A few essays, more or less anonymous,

were all the productions known to his contemporaries—essays which appeal but little to us. His letters to his son and to his godson, on which rest his fame, and which indeed, to some of us, seem dreary enough, were posthumous. In these letters, however, we find symptoms of his bookishness. From them we may suppose him versed in the literature of his own country, of France, and perhaps of Italy. In England his idol is Bolingbroke. In France he sees such perfection, that one would infer that he worships there a literary polytheism. But his verdict on Italian literature separates him for ever from my predecessor in your Presidency. The only Italian poets that he thinks worth reading are Tasso and Ariosto. He deliberately excludes Dante, a veto which seems an abiding slur on his perception; and which, in Mr. Gladstone's judgement, would have constituted him a sort of literary outlaw. Moreover, in spite of Chesterfield's undoubted love of reading, he places on record an injunction which strikes him altogether out of the category of thorough bookishness. "Lay aside," he solemnly says, "the best book whenever you can go into the best company; and, depend upon it, you change for the better." Perhaps, when we remember that the best society, in the highest sense, is rarely attainable, he is right. But then we might not all agree as to what constitutes the best society. I am not going to discuss the point to-night, but I strongly recommend it to the debating societies of our University, which, after a protracted existence, must be gaping like stranded oysters for fresh subjects of polemic.

XXVI. It is in any case a hard saying, and must be held to exclude Chesterfield from the straitest sect of the worshipful company of bookmen.

Mr. Gladstone would certainly not have subscribed to it in this bare and absolute form. But, in any case, were Chesterfield ten times as bookish as he was, he would not have equalled Mr. Gladstone any more in that quality than in the length and splendour of his public career. There is no parallel between them; I only take Chesterfield because I can think of nobody else.

I believe, then, as I have said before, that nowhere in history, so far as I know, is there an instance of so intensely bookish a man as Mr. Gladstone, who was at the same time so consummate a man of affairs. I limit myself to the two last centuries as alone offering conditions analogous to those in which Mr. Gladstone lived. And I must again guard myself by saying that I am not now speaking of the mere collection of libraries, in which several, perhaps many, statesmen have surpassed him. I mean by bookishness the general love of books—reading, buying, handling, hunting them. The combination in his case is, I believe, unique, and will probably remain so. Day by day the calls of public life become more and more exacting, absorbing, imperious. Each fresh development of them makes them more and more unsuitable for the student and the recluse. Literature is constantly becoming less and less necessary for the politician. During the first half of this century a classical quotation was considered the indispensable ornament of a parliamentary speech. Greek quotations

passed long ago into space — found their way back perhaps to ancient Hellas—and even Latin quotations may be said to have been buried with Mr. Gladstone. The Blue-book has superseded Homer, and Virgil is swamped in the *Statesman's Year-book*.

We shall understand all this better, perhaps, by abandoning the task of seeking analogies for Mr. Gladstone's love of books, and by taking the greatest imaginable contrast to him.

There has of late been given to the world the remarkable biography of a remarkable man—the late Charles Stewart Parnell. For ten years Mr. Parnell filled the largest space in Mr. Gladstone's public life, perhaps in English public life: his position in his own country it is unnecessary to define or describe. What was the secret of this prodigious success? It has never been revealed, perhaps it never will be, perhaps it never can be. One point, however, is clear, that it was due to a character and temperament the exact antipodes of Mr. Gladstone's. The one ardent, enthusiastic, fascinating, exuberant in his sympathies and studies, clutching with both hands at every fruit and blossom of the tree of knowledge; the other icy, silent, superstitious, concentrated, a political enigma of the profoundest interest. But to-night we are concerned with only one aspect of each. Mr. Parnell professed a general ignorance, even of a subject that concerned him so nearly as Irish history. And this strange want of the knowledge to be found in books appears all through his life. "I am very ignorant," he once said to his biographer, who smiled incredulously.

XXVI. "Yes," he continued, "I mean what I say. I am very ignorant of these things. I have read very little, but I am smart, and can pick up information quickly." On another occasion he had engaged to lecture on Irish history at Cork. Parnell said to a friend, "I really do not know anything about Irish history. Have you any books I can read?" The day of the lecture came; it was to be delivered at eight o'clock. At a quarter to eight, when dinner was over, Parnell said, "Now I must read up the history," and he asked for some writing-paper and the historical books. He arrived at the hall at 9.15, was received with enthusiasm, and got through his lecture successfully. That anecdote seems to me profoundly interesting for many reasons. The nerve, the coolness, the declared ignorance of Irish history, and the enthusiasm of an audience that had been waiting for an hour and a quarter, are all equally remarkable.

This carries me far beyond my contention that bookishness and statesmanship are rarely compatible, for it appears to point to a complete immunity from books as the secret of political success.

And yet is it so? Is not Parnell a phenomenon and an exception to all rules? Is not the true life of the politician the balance of action and study—study not merely as a preparation for action, but of literature as a recreation? Among the great men of action we recall Frederick's love of letters and Napoleon's travelling library. Among statesmen we think of Pitt's sofa with its shelf of thumbed classics; and of Fox, a far more ardent

lover of books, exchanging them and his garden for the House of Commons almost with tears; and of Gladstone's Temple of Peace. XXVI.

And surely, even if it be not the best, it is the happiest way. There is little vestige of happiness in the life of Parnell. There is not perhaps too much happiness in the life of any statesman. But no one who knew him could think Mr. Gladstone otherwise than happy, and one of the main sources of his happiness was his bookishness. We may indeed say more than that. We may say that where, as in his case, the mind absorbs and uses the books, and the books do not cloud and embarrass the mind, the purpose of the statesman and the eloquence of the orator gather colour and force from books as a river takes the hues and gathers up the springs of the regions it traverses. But even here I must guard myself once more: Mr. Gladstone was a prodigy, and no rule deduced from his life can be absolute for others.

And so I leave you to form your judgement for yourselves, by the light of your own reason, by the guidance of your instinct. For, in truth, all ends in that. All the lectures and addresses, inaugural or otherwise, of the Philosophical Institution, or any other institution, athenaeum, or college, can only help you to form your own judgement, and to rely on yourselves. Read books like Gladstone, or disdain books like Parnell; as to that you must judge for yourselves. There is no royal road to success in public life; what suits one will not suit another. But of this at least I am sure, that, putting politics and success equally out of the question,

XXVI. if a man wants to develop his faculties to the utmost advantage, and to combine the greatest amount of work with the greatest amount of happiness, he cannot do better than imitate, so far as he is able, the methods of study, the economy of time, and the regularity of life practised by my illustrious predecessor in the Presidency of the Philosophical Institution.

XXVII

QUESTIONS OF EMPIRE[1]

This is a pleasant stage in life for many reasons. I had hoped, indeed, that to-day we should have been graced by the presence of our honoured and venerated Chancellor,[2] one of the oldest and kindest of my friends, but domestic anxiety at the last moment kept him away. It is rare, I believe, that a Chancellor comes to preside over a Rector's address—there is, perhaps, some fear of a violent conflict of jurisdiction—but I should have been all the more honoured and pleased by his presence, for I should always be pleased to find him by my side at any period of my life, or in any capacity, as he is a noble and genial specimen of the best type of a Scottish gentleman. Long may he occupy his illustrious chair. And then, on the other hand, there are my young constituents; not merely those who voted for me but those who voted against me, as well as those who from their unlucky juniority had not the opportunity of doing either. So I stand before you to-day with much gratitude and affection. I have only known in my life two sorts of constituents, the

[1] An Address delivered as Lord Rector to the Students of the University of Glasgow, November 16, 1900.

[2] Lord Stair.

XXVII. municipal and the academical. Both have been kind to me. Neither has ever rejected me. And I am proud to come and thank you for the great majority by which you elected me last autumn. There is no more generous or inspiring a constituency than the youth of a University ; trained like intellectual athletes for the struggle with the world ; straining for the combat, and scornful of its obstacles or its wounds : their hopes and triumphs and sorrows before them. Through the great gate you see the world spread out, and you are eager to be in it. Do not hurry ; you will be in it soon enough.

In the full swell of a Roman triumph the victor had always a monitor at hand to remind him that he was mortal. And the winning candidate, if he be prone to exultation in his Rectorial Election, has soon to face a spectre which will promptly reduce his hilarity. I need scarcely say that I allude to the Rectorial Address. The wisest of all your Rectors, I mean Adam Smith, gave a supreme proof of his sagacity by never delivering one at all. We should all of us perhaps follow his example, if we dared, or if we honourably could. It is, I admit, a great occasion, if one feels inspired for it. But if not, it is little less than a nightmare. It is not a speech, it is not a sermon, it is not a lecture. It is by tradition too long to be light, too short to be exhaustive. It is something *sui generis*, and I am glad that the genus is not extensive. I cannot even affect to regret that this specimen is my last.

What is the nature of this formidable deliverance ? I think that it is sometimes misunder-

stood. Men of eminence are apt to give their faint recollections of a classical education, or to deliver some glowing rhetoric on the training of the mind. Either course is beyond many of us, and this is not perhaps to be regretted. Why do you elect a man a Rector? It is very rarely because of qualifications which would enable him to deliver either of the discourses that I have mentioned. It is singular, indeed, to note how seldom you choose a man of literary eminence to the Lord Rectorship. One reason may be that he does not show such good sport as a politician. A politician means a fight. A man of letters usually means a triangular fight, if a fight at all. This is obvious enough. But may there not be another reason still? The outward and visible result of a Rectorial Election to the vulgar and gentile mind is the delivery of a Rectorial Address. We in the inner circle of course know better: we know that he is elected to serve on University Courts, and to be an active and intelligent officer of the University. But for that other object it seems to me that you deliberately choose men out of the world, from amid the strife of men, the jangle of tongues, the stress of affairs, and bid them come as Rectors to your academic groves to speak to you of what they know, of that with which they are conversant, and not so much of the subjects with which you deal yourselves. XXVII.

And I am strengthened in this opinion by the fact that one of the few literary Lord Rectors of recent years pursued this very course—I mean Thomas Carlyle. The other day I had in my hand the spare, pathetic notes which he used for his

XXVII. discourse, all the more pathetic, as that day of triumph was on the edge of his wife's grave. That discourse dealt not with the abstract, but with the concrete, with practical advice for study and conduct, drawn from his own experience of life, in a conversational style. In all the mass of rectorial addresses it is the least elaborate, the most solemn, and the most telling.

I have thought, then, that I would best serve you, my young constituents, by speaking to you of a subject which affects us all, and with which I have had something, though not much, to do, a concrete contemporary subject, which fills all minds at times, which will increasingly fill yours. I wish to say something to you of that British Empire of which we are the tenants in fee, of which we inherit the responsibility and the glory. It is so vast a topic that I can only touch a fringe, I can only deal with considerations which directly affect yourselves. It is in the strict sense a political subject, but it is outside party politics, and can and should be treated without affecting the most sensitive apprehension. But even here I must make a single exception; for there are some to whom the very word is abhorrent; to whom, at any rate, the word is under suspicion. It bears to them some taint of disagreeable association. They affect to see in it danger of braggadocio or aggression. Personally, I do not share their suspicions. Still, it is not the word, but the thing that I value. I admit that the term has been constantly prostituted in Britain as well as elsewhere. And yet we cannot discard it, for there is no convenient synonym. If any

other word can be invented which as adequately expresses a number of states of vast size under a single sovereign I would gladly consider it. But at present there is none. And in the meantime the word Empire represents to us our history, our tradition, our race. It is to us a matter of influence, of peace, of civilisation, above all, a question of faith. XXVII.

But it is also a matter of business, a practical affair. You have received from your forefathers this great appanage: no one outside an asylum wishes to be rid of it. The question, then, at this time is simply how to do the best with it. That is a tremendous problem, so tremendous that you and I and all of us have to take our share of it. And all of us in this hall, rich or poor, young or old, clever or dull, can do something, each in his line of life, like bees in their cells, to make this Empire surer, better, and happier, even if only by being honest, industrious citizens ourselves. Moreover, the Empire never needed such loyal service so much as now. Never did it so urgently require the strenuous and united support of its subjects. For in the present state of the world an active vigilance is more than ever required. We have to make sure of our equipment. This we are apt to take for granted. On the contrary, I maintain that there is much to overhaul, to examine, and to reconsider: that what would have kept the Empire together in the days when we had an unenvied monopoly of colonies, and when armaments were both less vast and less menacing, will not suffice now; that there is a disposition to challenge both our

XXVII. naval and commercial position which requires our utmost vigilance; that we may have to test our training, our habits, our character, our capacity for work by severer standards than have hitherto been applied; that we must be called upon for effort and sacrifice if we wish to maintain our place; that we must be prepared, in a word, to set our house in order and to consider whether what has sufficed in the past will suffice in the future.

What is this Empire?

The last calculation seems to be this: that its area is between eleven and twelve millions of square miles, and that its subjects number in round figures some four hundred millions. The details in so spacious a summary matter little. It is already beyond comprehension. And yet one cannot but pause for a moment to reflect that but for a small incident—the very ordinary circumstance of the acceptance of a peerage—this Empire might have been incalculably greater. Had the elder Pitt, when he became First Minister, not left the House of Commons, he would probably have retained his sanity and his authority. He would have prevented, or suppressed, the reckless budget of Charles Townshend, have induced George III. to listen to reason, have introduced representatives from America into the Imperial Parliament, and preserved the thirteen American colonies to the British Crown. Is it fanciful to dwell for a moment on what might have happened? The Reform Bill which was passed in 1832 would probably have been passed much earlier; for the new blood of America would

have burst the old vessels of the Constitution. It would have provided for some self-adjusting system of representation, such as now prevails in the United States, by which increasing population is proportionately represented. And at last, when the Americans became the majority, the seat of Empire would perhaps have been moved solemnly across the Atlantic, and Britain have become the historical shrine and the European outpost of the world empire. XXVII.

What an extraordinary revolution it would have been had it been accomplished! The greatest known without bloodshed; the most sublime transference of power in the history of mankind. Our conceptions can scarcely picture the procession across the Atlantic, the greatest sovereign in the greatest fleet in the universe, Ministers, Government, Parliament departing solemnly for the other hemisphere, not, as in the case of the Portuguese sovereigns emigrating to Brazil, under the spur of necessity, but under the vigorous embrace of the younger world. It is well to bridle the imagination, lest it become fantastic and extravagant.

Moreover, it is a result to which we can scarcely acclimatise ourselves, even in idea. But the other effects might have been scarcely less remarkable. America would have hung on the skirts of Britain and pulled her back out of European complications. She would have profoundly affected the foreign policy of the mother country in the direction of peace. Her influence in our domestic policy would have been scarcely less potent. It might probably have appeased and even con-

XXVII. tented Ireland. The ancient constitution of Great Britain would have been rendered more comprehensive and more elastic. On the other hand, the American yearning for liberty would have taken a different form; it would have blended with other traditions and flowed into other moulds. And, above all, had there been no separation, there would have been no War of Independence, no War of 1812, with all the bitter memories that these have left on American soil. To secure that priceless boon I could have been satisfied to see the British Federal Parliament sitting in Columbia Territory. It is difficult, indeed, to dam the flow of ideas in dealing with so pregnant a possibility. But I restrain myself, because I know that I am dreaming, and that an historical dream, though not a bad relaxation in itself, should not be allowed to become a nightmare. I acknowledge, too, that this is what is called an academical discussion. But where should one be academical if not in the ancient University of Glasgow?

Let us then return to earth, or at any rate to that large proportion of it which is covered by the Union Jack. I have, before wandering into the Empire as it might have been, given you the broad aspect of the Empire as it is. Now, for my purpose it is not important to consider whether this Empire is greater or less than others, for it is impossible to compare states. Mere area, mere population, do not necessarily imply power; still less do they import the security and contentment of the inhabitants. But my main reason for discarding relative proportions

is very different. We have to consider not others, but ourselves. It is not alien Empires which should concern us, except when they menace or compete. Our first main necessary responsibility is to our own. It is so vast, so splendid, so pregnant, that we have to ask ourselves: Are we adequate to it? Can we discharge our responsibility to God and to man for so magnificent, so populous a proportion of the world? XXVII.

Our answer, offhand, is ready and simple. We are adequate. We do discharge our responsibilities. We are a conquering and imperial race. All over the world we have displayed our mettle. We have discovered and annexed and governed vast territories. We have circled the globe with our commerce. We have penetrated the pagan races with our missionaries. We have inoculated the universe with our institutions. We are apt, indeed, to believe that our soldiers are braver, our sailors hardier, our captains, naval and military, skilfuller, our statesmen wiser than those of other nations. As for our constitution, there is no Briton at any hour of the day or night who will suffer it to be said that there is any that approaches it.

All this is in a measure true, I hope; at any rate, I am not here to dispute it. When, indeed, I remember some episodes during the past twelve months, I feel that it is hardly possible to exaggerate the courage and character of our nation; the brave men at the front, the silent endurance at home; I cannot think of these without emotion, as well as with admiration and with pride. But our boasts, even if they be true, do not contain

XXVII. the whole truth. It would be well enough if we could lie on a bank of asphodel, basking in our history, our glory, and our past. That, however, is not possible. Never was it less possible than now. Fifty years ago we had to face a world that was comparatively inert. Europe was concerned with Europe and little more. The armies of Europe were relatively small and not wholly disproportionate to ours. The United States had no army. Ten or twelve years later a terrible convulsion rent the great Republic, and for a moment her hosts were numbered by the million. That baleful flame shot up to heaven and sank down when the agony was overpast, but its memory remained a portent. Twenty years later a national war arose between France and Germany, which produced a potent German Empire, and converted all the nations of Europe into passive armies. We remained complacent in the confidence that these storms could not pass the Channel. The Channel has indeed done much for us. It has often protected us from the broils of the Continent. It has been our bulwark, though heedless speculators have sought to undermine it. But it cannot guard us from the peaceful attacks of trained and scientific rivalry in the arts of peace. It cannot protect us against the increasing subtlety and development of the arts of war.

There is a further and perhaps a mightier change in the conditions of the world during the past half-century. Fifty years ago the world looked lazily on while we discovered, developed, and annexed its waste or savage territories. All

that is now changed. The colonial microbe has penetrated almost every empire except that of Charles V., which has outlived it; and even here I must except his Netherland provinces. France, in the last ten or fifteen years, has annexed perhaps a quarter of Africa, and has made a considerable irruption into Asia. Germany has shown no less a desire to become a colonising nation. Russia pursues her secular path of unchecked absorption, constantly attracting fresh bodies into her prodigious orbit. Italy has been bitten by the same desire for expansion. The United States finds itself sitting like a startled hen on a brood of unnumbered islands in the Philippine group. All this is well and fair enough, but it changes our relation to the world. Every mile of unmapped country, every naked tribe of savages, is wrangled over as if it were situated in the centre of Europe. The world has shrunk into a continent of ascertained boundaries. The illimitable and the unknown, the happy field of dreams, have disappeared. That is a blow to imagination, but it is not a fact of substantial importance to us, who do not desire to increase our territories. Indirectly, however, it raises a number of delicate and disputable points. Moreover, a colonial passion is apt to cause an ill feeling, composed of envy, jealousy, and other hostile tendencies towards the ancient colonial empire. This again does not signify, provided we realise it, and do not deserve it, and are ready to deal with it. XXVII.

Then again there is the question of trade. Foreign countries used to sneer at trade. It was

XXVII. considered below the dignity of warlike races. We were described as a nation of shopkeepers. Now every nation wishes to be a nation of shopkeepers. This new object is pursued with the intelligent purpose which was once applied to the balance of power. That is a great change. We once had a sort of monopoly; we now have to fight for existence.

I summarise these various circumstances, to show how greatly the conditions of our commonwealth and its relations to the outer world have become modified. Some of these changes have passed almost unperceived. I call attention to them, to demonstrate the necessity of our asking ourselves this vital and imperative question: Have our State machinery and methods been examined and remodelled in view of them? If not, no time should be lost.

After all, a State is in essence a great joint stock company with unlimited liability on the part of its shareholders. It is said, and said with truth, that difficult as it is to make a great fortune, it is scarcely less difficult to keep it. With even more of accuracy the same may be said of a business. A fortune without care is apt to disappear, as snow wastes away in a languid thaw. And a business depends on incessant vigilance, on method, on keeping abreast of the times. A business in these days can live but a short time on its past reputation, and what is true of a business is true of an Empire. It is found out to be a sham: its aims, its government, its diplomacy are seen to be out of date by watchful rivals; an excuse is found for a quarrel (and

such excuses are easy); the Empire is tested, and fails, and succumbs. XXVII.

As in a business, too, a periodical stocktaking is necessary in a State. So far as mere money is concerned, this is regularly done. We know with some accuracy our income, our expenditure, and our debts. But money, though a national necessity and a valuable international weapon, is not everything. A business house in these days looks over its managers and its agents, and considers whether they continue efficient. It surveys its methods and compares them with those of its rivals; it discards those which are obsolete, and adopts all improvements. If it does not do this, it is doomed. This sort of stocktaking is unknown to the British Empire. The ordinary Briton thinks it is needless. He says comfortably that we have won Waterloo and Blenheim and Trafalgar, and have produced Nelson and Wellington and Roberts; we have plenty of trade and plenty of money; how on earth could we do better? And this fatal complacency is so ingrained, that some despair of a remedy until we are awakened by a national disaster. For an Empire, like a business, if neglected, may become obsolete.

Take the example of Prussia, for I know no other so striking, of the necessity of constant vigilance in the strict maintenance of a State. Though he began to reign over little but an inland spit of sand, her great Frederick raised her to be the most formidable power in Europe. So he left her when he died in 1786. And yet, twenty years afterwards, owing to the neglect and inadequacy

XXVII. of his successors, she had almost ceased to exist. She was wrecked and dismembered and prostrate; she ceased to have a voice among the nations. That interval was short, for the catastrophe brought out the real resources of the national character. You will see in Königsberg, which some of you perhaps venerate as the home of Kant, the little room—at the end of a long hall, chosen for that reason so that none might overhear—the little room where the heroic and saintly Queen Louise worked for the regeneration of the country. But here again, as in most Teutonic transactions, her statesmen were not satisfied with stop-gap reform. They went to the root of the matter. They indeed effected a sane, simple, and momentous amendment in their army system. But they went much further. Stein and his compeers saw that a malady which had almost produced dissolution required a drastic remedy. They had the courage to face it. At great sacrifice, with natural grumblings and moanings, still audible to us, they cut the feudal system out of the body politic. The remedy was severe, but it saved the patient. In no other country but Prussia would such a course, even under such circumstances, have been possible. But the North German, when he sees that things go wrong, will at once return to first principles. So Prussia was saved, and emerged once more a first-rate power. Then there was another interval on which it is not necessary to dwell. And, again, with the aid of trained, able servants not afraid to face heroic measures, she emerged more puissant than ever before. Can there be a clearer

instance of the building up of a power by vigilant care, of its quick destruction by neglect, and of its recovery by a return to the secret of its original success ? XXVII.

The first question, then, as I have said, which we must put to ourselves, and we cannot put a more momentous one, is : Are we worthy of this prodigious inheritance ? Is the race which holds it capable of maintaining and developing it ? Are we, like the Romans, not merely a brave, but also a persistent, business-like, alert, governing people ? And if we can answer this affirmatively, as I hope we can, we have these further questions to ask ourselves : Are we going the right way about our work, and are our methods abreast of our time ?

I do not profess to ask these questions to-day, still less to answer them. But I suggest that you should ask them of yourselves, for they concern you all. You cannot, indeed, give a full or adequate answer ; but the questions will recur to you as long as you live. At different periods of life you will give different answers, but no one can attempt a complete reply. Even if the nation chose to ask them of itself, I suppose it would only appoint a Royal Commission, which would produce a library of blue-books when we were in our graves. And yet the nation might do worse. Suppose when it decennially takes stock of its population, that it took stock of a little more. Suppose, when it numbered the people, that it tested their plight ; that it inquired if their condition were better or worse than ten years before ; and so as to the position

XXVII. of our industries, of our education, of our naval and military systems. Suppose that the State did at some such periods demand an account of each of its stewards. The general result would probably be satisfactory; but it may be predicted with much more certainty that weaknesses, and abuses, and stagnation would be discovered; an ill condition, which is apt when neglected to be contagious and dangerous.

The nation does, indeed, confess itself from time to time spasmodically through the newspapers. But that impulse, sincere though it be, is apt to disappear with the stress which inspired it. It is not sustained or business-like. It evaporates in a committee, or in some new ecstasy. Dogged, unrelenting, unreserved self-examination there is none; perhaps none is possible. The Churches, it is true, are always demanding it—all the more honour to them. But the adverb "always" contains the secret of their want of success, or of their only partial success. They are always, necessarily, doing it, so they necessarily deaden their effect; it is their business to do it, and so men pass on. The shadow of the future is as vain as all other shadows. Prosperity, while it endures, is the drug, the hashish, which blinds the patient to all but golden visions. And yet we are nearing an epoch of no common kind, short indeed in the lives of nations, but longer than the life of man, when we may well pause to take stock. Within six weeks we shall have closed the nineteenth century, and have entered on a new one for better or for worse. It is, of course, only an imaginary division of time,

though it seems solemn enough, for we are on a pinnacle of the world's temple where we can look forward or look back.

What will that twentieth century be? What will be its distinctive note? Of the nineteenth we may say generally that it has been an era of emancipation, considerable though not complete. Nations, as a rule, have been sorted into boundaries more consonant with their aspirations and traditions than was formerly the case. The tyranny of sects, in Britain at any rate, has partially abated. The undue pressure of government has diminished. Slavery has disappeared. All over the world there have been great strides towards freedom; and, though inadequate, they have been so considerable as to produce for a moment an apathy of self-satisfaction. But the twentieth! What does it bear in its awful womb? Of one thing only can we be certain—that it will be a period of keen, intelligent, almost fierce, international competition, more probably in the arts of peace even than in the arts of war. How then should we prepare for such an epoch and such a conflict?

It is a matter in which Universities have a deep concern. For there is one fact, at any rate, to which we cannot be blind. The first need of our country is a want of men. We want men for all sorts of high positions—first-rate men, if possible; if not, as nearly first-rate as may be. The supply of such men is never excessive, but, as the Empire has increased, so has the demand, and the supply seems to be much less elastic. In other words, the development and expansion

XXVII. of the Empire have produced a corresponding demand for first-rate men, but the supply has remained, at best, stationary. Of course, we do not employ all those that we have, for, by the balance of our constitution, while one half of our capable statesmen is in full work, the other half is, by that fact, standing idle in the market-place with no one to hire them. This used to be on a five years' shift, but all that is now altered. Anyhow, it is a terrible waste. But, putting that incident apart, even among the fixed eternal stars of the public service there is not a sufficient supply of men for the purposes of government. I could name a typical diplomatist, a typical soldier, a typical civil servant, and could say of each of them that, could he be multiplied by forty, the market would not be glutted.

I am not gloomy about all this. I believe that the men, or something of the kind, are there; the difficulty is to find them. The processes of discovery and selection are apt to lead to jobbery: so we employ the slow ladder of a fixed service and of promotion by seniority. Now, a senior is a very good thing, but I am sure that I shall have the unanimous approval of my constituents in saying that a junior is a better—wherever, at any rate, physical strength and activity are required. Our civil service is a noble one, perhaps matchless—certainly unsurpassed. Its zeal and capacity for its special work are admirable. Its members are loyal to all chiefs and strenuous to help them. But it does not give us what we want for the elastic needs of the Empire. A service of that kind, however excellent, and perhaps because it

is excellent, is apt to become a caste. Moreover, the admittance to it is by brain-work alone. Now, brains, though necessary and desirable, are not everything; for administration under varying climes and circumstances, what I may call wild administration, you want much more. You want, for this purpose, force of character, quick decision, physical activity, and endurance of all kinds, besides, if possible, the indefinable qualities which sway mankind. You want men who will go anywhere at a moment's notice and do anything. These qualities cannot be tested by civil service examiners. And yet we have a good deal of daredevil, adaptable raw material on hand. Some of the young generals, who have come through the arduous experiences of this war, will be fit for almost anything that they may be called on to do. But these have been seasoned by the severest of training, and we cannot often afford such an education.

This dearth of men, as I have said, concerns you directly, for you are part of the coming generation, and I hope that there may be among my constituents some of these necessary men. But this at any rate is clear, that it is the function of our Universities to produce such men.

And this leads me to another question. Are we setting ourselves sufficiently to train such men? I doubt it. The most illustrious of our public schools has no modern side. Oxford and Cambridge still exact their dole of Latin and Greek. I cannot believe from the imperial point of view, having regard to the changed conditions of the world, that this is necessary, or adequate,

XXVII. or wise. I concede Latin as a training instrument and a universal language. But how about Greek? It is perhaps the noblest of tongues: it enshrines perhaps the noblest of literatures. To learned men it is a necessity. But must it be a part of the necessary equipment of the ordinary youth of the nineteenth century, who has so much to learn in order to be equal to his age? Heine once remarked with sardonic humour: "How fortunate were the Romans, that they had not to learn the Latin grammar, for if so they would not have had time to conquer the world." Well, I pass the Latin grammar with a gloomy respect, but I will say that the Greek grammar, except in the learned professions, seems to me a heavy burden for our Empire, subject as it is to eager and intelligent competition. I think that when our national ignorance of foreign languages has become not merely a byword but almost a commercial disaster, we might reconsider part of our educational apparatus.

This is no new question. Thirty-three years ago it was raised at Edinburgh by one who was not merely a remarkable statesman, but a brilliant scholar.[1] He had been a famous classical tutor at Oxford, yet nevertheless he protested against our educational bondage to the dead languages. The same protest is being raised in Edinburgh again to-day, but this time by the voice of the mercantile community. The leading bodies of that calling lately appointed a committee to consider the subject of commercial education. Their report is well worth reading. They speak

[1] Robert Lowe, Lord Sherbrooke.

of the ancient tongues with courtesy and respect, but they demand something more practically useful, less divorced from everyday life. For one thing, they urge with earnestness the better teaching of modern languages. There is required, they say, on the part of the educational authorities, an admission that a man may be an educated and even a cultured gentleman, although he has not seriously studied Latin or Greek; and they further point out that both France and Germany possess invaluable literatures, with the advantage that they are in languages which are living and not dead. I agree with them in thinking that for the purposes of the present age, especially for the merchant and the politician, there is required a more modern education, more especially as regards languages. I do not pretend that a modern education will necessarily produce the men you need for all purposes of administration. No; but it will help you to train them, it will give them the weapons of life, it will give you citizens who are so far capable of meeting the new requirements of the world. XXVII.

I must not expatiate. I will merely say that we want good men for the public service: that the demand has grown with the growth of the Empire, and that the supply has failed to keep pace with it. I doubt, moreover, whether we are going the right way to rear such a supply. But that is only a small part of the question of race. In reality we do not depend so much on our governments as would seem to be the case. Looking back over the past century, there is one luminous fact—how little the Anglo-Saxon nations

XXVII. depend on their governments, or owe to them. The people wield their own destinies; they walk their own paths. The governments are passing signs; as it were the cockades of different colours which used to be worn, and which denoted the parties to which the wearers belonged. And this view of the case incalculably enhances the importance of our race problem. Our people in the main govern themselves—let them be worthy governors; mentally and physically let them be worthy of their high destiny.

But education, as I have said, is only a part of our race problem. An Empire such as ours requires as its first condition an imperial race—a race vigorous and industrious and intrepid. Are we rearing such a race? In the rural districts I trust that we are. I meet the children near Edinburgh returning from school, and I will match them against any children in the world. But in the great cities, in the rookeries and slums which still survive, an imperial race cannot be reared. You can scarcely produce anything in those foul nests of crime and disease but a progeny doomed from its birth to misery and ignominy. That is a rift in the corner-stone of your commonwealth, but it brings some of you directly into its service. For many here are reared to the service of medicine. They will be physicians, surgeons, medical officers, medical inspectors. Remember, then, that where you promote health and arrest disease, where you convert an unhealthy citizen into a healthy one, where you exercise your authority to promote sanitary conditions and suppress those which are the reverse, you in doing

your duty are also working for the Empire. XXVII.
"*Sanitas sanitatum, omnia sanitas*," said one of your dead Rectors, and he did not greatly exaggerate. Health of mind and body exalt a nation in the competition of the universe. The survival of the fittest is an absolute truth in the conditions of the modern world. Even if our schools and universities train the national mind efficiently, the national body may not be neglected. Another of your dead Rectors declared, in a phrase scarcely less famous than Lord Beaconsfield's, that the schoolmaster was abroad—meaning that he was active. Let us hope that we may soon feel that the medical officer is abroad with sufficient power in his arm, power which he must derive from public opinion as well as from his central or municipal employers.

And there are other relative questions which we cannot ignore. How do we stand with regard to those healthy, hardy, frugal virtues which mean so much, physically and morally, to a people? Whether an insidious and excessive luxury is not prevalent among us; whether the passion for wealth, its influence, and the worship it receives, be not a danger; whether, indeed, our land is not becoming the playground and pleasance of the plutocrats of all nations, in itself a symptom not wholly bad, but yet not wholly good, for a plutocracy is one of the most detestable of all dominations; these are grave questions with which we are confronted. Against this apparent luxury we set the rough manliness of our sports, our cricket, our football, our hunting. That in itself is no adequate answer, for even

XXVII. healthy sport, like other good things, may be overdone. But, looking back at the past as a guide for the future, I ask myself what was the secret of the marvellous success of the Scottish people during the last century in Scotland itself, in England, and in the outer Britains? It was not achieved in purple and fine linen, in soft raiment, or in kings' houses. No! their poverty was equal to their patriotism: their energy to both. How did they succeed? By intense industry, by severe frugality, by constant adaptability to all circumstances and all conditions, however rigorous and novel they might be. And so it was that they raised Scotland to wealth and Scotsmen to power, and made both Scotland and her sons the objects of that jealousy and suspicion which are some of the sincerest testimonies to success.

I have spoken of their intense industry, and this leads me to another question. Do we work hard enough?—or rather, as I would put it, Are we thorough enough? That was a great word "Thorough," bequeathed to us by one of the most memorable of British statesmen: a great word, not as he used it, but a word in itself which should thrill through all mankind from the age of reason to the shadow of death. But fortune, success, and well-being are apt to make us forget it. I doubt if Jeshurun, in his proverbial prosperity, kicked thoroughly; it was probably a sort of elegant flourish. And now we cannot but observe that it is beginning to be hinted that we are a nation of amateurs. Is this true? If so, it is not merely a grave charge but an obvious

danger. Let us test it in passing. For example, we are warriors, and merchants, and statesmen. Are we as thorough masters of these crafts as we should be? Wars, for example, always find us unprepared. I dare say no more, but so much is incontrovertible. And yet, on the other hand, I cannot help suspecting that in the most consummate military administration which now exists, nothing is left to chance which can be guarded against by forethought. Then, again, in statesmanship (I speak, of course, of all our statesmen of all parties), do we conspicuously shine? Are we business-like and thorough? Do we anticipate or follow events? Are our ministries not overwhelmed by the treble task of departmental administration, of preparing policies, and of oratorical combat, inside and outside Parliament? We have abroad the reputation of being subtle, unscrupulous, and of corrupting the universe with our gold. But, as a matter of fact, we are never subtle, seldom unscrupulous, and have no gold which Parliament would allow to be used in corruption. It is almost a reproach to the honourable statesmanship of Great Britain that abstaining as it does, voluntarily or involuntarily, from these successful qualities, it should have managed to earn all the opprobrium attached to them. XXVII.

Commerce, however, comes fairly within my limits as a bond of Empire, and affects our University, which stands aloft in such a teeming mart. Here then is, at any rate, ample opportunity for taking stock and considering methods. I cannot enter into the discussion whether there is cause for alarm as to the future of our trade:

XXVII. there is no time for that, nor is this the place. But it may fairly be alleged that there are disquieting symptoms. Whether these symptoms be truthful indications or not, they are at any rate worthy of careful, incisive investigation. In some quarters such indications are never neglected. I am greatly struck by a passage in the report of the United States Consul at Chemnitz, cited in the pamphlet in which our University sets forth its requirements. "If an industry in Germany languishes," he says, "immediately a commission inquires into the causes, and recommends remedial measures, among which usually is the advice to establish technical or industrial schools, devoted to the branch of business under consideration." In a word, they go to the root, to the principle, to the source.

This is thoroughness, this is the scientific method applied to manufacture, and we see its success. The Americans, I gather, have hitherto applied themselves rather less to the principles than the applications of science. I do not pretend to say which are right. The Germans are alarmed at the development of American commerce, and we are alarmed at both. At any rate, both in Germany and the United States you see an expenditure and a systematic devotion to commercial, and technical, and scientific training. I know that much is done, too, in Great Britain. But I doubt if even that is carried out in the same methodical way; nor is there anything like the same lavish, though well-considered, expenditure. It always seems to me as if in Germany nothing, and in Britain

everything, is left to chance. Nothing but a miracle can stop us, think the Germans, when they have completed their preparations. We shall have our usual miracle, thinks the cheerful Briton, as he sets out a good deal in arrear. With the same intelligent persistence with which the German makes war, he has entered on the peaceful conflict of commerce, and therefore has achieved the same brilliant success. We need not envy that success, we do not grudge it; but it is well to observe it, and to note its causes.

Commerce, then, is a bond of Empire which this University by its training may do much to strengthen. The mercantile committee at Edinburgh demand, indeed, that to our Universities shall be added a commercial faculty which would stimulate the commercial side in our secondary schools, and which would be of substantial importance in attracting to the University men who are about to enter on a commercial life. They "believe that a University education would be of the greatest service to the men who are to occupy the chief position in large commercial undertakings." Our University has not as yet seen its way, where so much has to be done, to take this new and important step. It has done much, it is doing much, but it is well aware of its weakness. It is now appealing for aid to place itself on a properly scientific footing, a footing adequate to its position in this great commercial community, which so greatly needs and which can so fruitfully utilise opportunities of technical and scientific training. It will not, I think, appeal to the second city of the Empire in vain.

XXVII. But the newest of our Universities has advantages which are denied to the more ancient, with regard to modern requirements. For the practical purposes of the present day a university which starts in the twentieth century has a great superiority over a university founded in the fifteenth; more especially when it is launched with keen intelligence of direction and ample funds, as is the new University of Birmingham. These practical universities are the universities of the future, for the average man, who has to work for his livelihood, cannot superadd the learning of the dead to the educational requirements of his life and his profession. There will always be universities, or at any rate colleges, for the scholar, the teacher, and the divine; but year by year the ancient universities will have to adapt themselves more and more to modern exigencies. And where so much has to be absolutely novel it is perhaps easier to begin than to remodel or adapt. So that the new universities, which do not require for their utilitarian purposes hoary antiquity or ancient prescription, will have an advantage over the venerable schools which have for centuries guarded and interpreted and transmitted the accumulated treasures of erudition.

There was a time, long years ago, when the spheres of action and of learning were separate and distinct; when laymen dealt hard blows and left letters to the priesthood. That was to some extent the case when our oldest universities were founded. But the separation daily narrows, if it has not already disappeared. It has been said that the true university of our days is a collection

of books. What if a future philosopher shall say that the best university is a workshop? And yet the latter definition bids fair to be the sounder of the two. The training of our schools and colleges must daily become more and more the training for action, for practical purpose. The question will be asked of the product of our educational system: "Here is a young fellow of twenty; he has passed the best years of acquisition and impression; he has cost so much; what is his value? for what, in all the manifold activities of the world, is he fit?" And if the answer be not satisfactory, if the product be only a sort of learned mummy, the system will be condemned. Are there not thousands of lads to-day plodding away, or supposed to be plodding away, at the ancient classics who will never make anything of those classics, and who, at the first possible moment, will cast them into space, never to reopen them? Think of the wasted time that that implies; not all wasted perhaps, for something may have been gained in power of application, but entirely wasted so far as available knowledge is concerned. And if you consider, as you will have to consider in the stress of competition, that the time and energy of her citizens is part of the capital of the commonwealth, all those wasted years represent a dead loss to the Empire. XXVII.

If, then, these recent events and the present conditions of the world induce thinkers and leaders in this country to test our strength and methods for the great—but, I hope, peaceful—struggle before us, they must reckon the training of man. On that, under Providence, depends the

XXVII. future, and the immediate future, of the race; and what is Empire but the predominance of race?

How is that predominance to be secured? Remember the conditions: nations all becoming more dense and numerous, and therefore more hungry and more difficult to satisfy; nations more and more educated and intelligent, more observant of each other; nations more and more alive to their substantial interests and capable of pursuing them; nations, therefore, increasingly aware of the vital necessity of a healthy, growing commerce, and fiercely determined to obtain it; nations more and more civilised, and therefore less and less anxious for the wager of battle, but still ready even for that, if it be necessary for their new objects. After all, when you have reduced all this to its last expression, it comes to this — the keener and more developed intelligence of humanity, stimulated by competition and enhanced by training. It is with that intelligence that we have to struggle and to vie.

This conflict we have no reason to fear, if we choose to rouse ourselves. We have, I believe, the best natural material in the world. But I doubt if we are sufficiently alive to the exigencies of the situation. It is perhaps well to revel in a sunburst of prosperity and of high wages. It may be well to owe much of that prosperity to an unbounded exportation of coal, of which we have a large but limited supply, and which is vitally necessary to us as the element of existence. It is well in a time of stress to send a host of spirited volunteers to the front, to admire their hereditary

valour, and to welcome them back. It is well to be convinced that we are the finest fellows on the earth, and supreme on the seas. If that be the truth it is comfortable enough. But the mere exhilarating impression is scarcely sufficient. If it were founded on hard, tested facts it would be eminently satisfactory. But is it ? XXVII.

There is no disparagement implied in the criticism of this attitude. There is only a sense of the heedless self-confidence of strength. Our people do not realise the actual closeness of competition, and the cold, elaborate, vigilant science which that fact involves. The calculating tortoise in these days will always overtake the exuberant hare ; and yet even the tortoise will seek to improve his pace. Everything that survives becomes refined to an art. Take your games as an instance. Chess, I suppose, was in its inception an artless diversion. It now taxes the most acute minds, and elicits new powers from the brain. The first cricketer, as I judge from portraits, played with an elementary club, which would now be wholly incompetent to defend a wicket for an instant. But football affords an even stronger illustration. I suppose it began in the childish propensity to play with a ball, and the boyish anxiety to kick anything. But it has developed into a science. I know of no sport which affords such lessons for national success as Association football. I do not indeed understand the refinements of the game. But the meanest intellect can grasp that it implies incessant watchfulness ; that its essence is an alert combination of all powers for one object ; that

XXVII. indolence or selfishness are fatal; that the player indeed who does not do his best to co-operate or who plays for his own hand must necessarily be outlawed. So it is with nations. If they desire to survive they must constantly sharpen their intelligence and equipment. They need the constant co-operation of the Government with the governed; of science and vigilance with commerce; of the teachers with the taught, and with the age in which they teach.

Remember too this historical fact. We belong to a nation which has ever been ambitious. Under the great Edwards and Harries and the mighty reign of Elizabeth, ambition grew and swelled and has never had leisure to shrink. But ambition, though an exalting, is an exacting virtue. It is made of stern stuff; it cannot endure apathy or even content. It exacts constant sacrifice and untiring endeavour. Planting a flag here and there, or demarcating regions with a red line on a map, are vain diversions if they do not imply an unswerving purpose to develop and to maintain. But maintenance requires that we shall be alive to all modern methods. Yet we are apt to forget this, and to imagine that our swaddling clothes will suffice for our maturity.

I urge you, then, to realise in your own persons and studies the responsibility which rests on yourselves. You are, after all, members of that company of adventurers (used in the Elizabethan and not the modern sense) which is embarked in the business of carrying this British Empire through the twentieth century. Each of you has his share in that glorious heritage, and

each of you is answerable for that share. Be, then, practical partners, intelligent partners, industrious partners, and so you will be in the best sense practical, intelligent, industrious imperialists. Be inspired in your various callings with the thought of the service that you can do to your country in faithfully following your profession, so that in doing private you are doing public duty too. The Church, the Law, and Medicine, those chaste and venerable sisters, will, I suppose, claim most of you, and in the service of each you have ample opportunities of rendering service to the commonwealth. The Law is the ladder to Parliament; and the tribunal of appeal is, and I hope will increasingly be, a constitutional bond of Empire. The missions of the Churches, and the Churches themselves, apart from their sacred functions and home labours, which directly serve the State so far as they raise their flocks, have incalculably aided in the expansion, consolidation, and civilisation of the Empire. And Medicine should tend and raise the race, on which all depends. For from my point of view there is not a close in the darkest quarters of Glasgow, or a crofter's cabin in the Hebrides, which is not a matter of imperial concern; quite as truly, in its proportion and degree, as those more glowing topics to which that adjective is too often limited. XXVII.

And mark this, in all that I have said there is no word of war, not even the beat of a drum, or the distant singing of a bullet. To some the Empire is little else, and that makes many hate the word. That is not my view. Our Empire is not founded on the precedents associated with

XXVII. that name. It is not the realm of conquest which that term has been wont to imply. It has often used the sword, it could not exist without the sword, but it does not live by the sword. Defence and readiness to fight are vital enough in their way, but not less vital is the civil and domestic side ; the commerce, the education, the intelligence, the unceasing leaven of a high and the sour decadence of a low ideal. War and conquest can fill the lives of but a part of the nation : a sane and simple duty to the Empire may well inspire the whole.

And when we work in that spirit we should receive grace from the idea, from that glorious vision transformed into fact—the British Empire. Remember how incomparably Shakespeare described it :

> This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle,
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden, demi-paradise,
> This fortress built by Nature for herself
> Against infection and the hand of war,
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone set in the silver sea,
>
> * * * * *
>
> This blessed spot, this earth, this realm, this England.

And yet that was only the source and centre of what we now behold, which has soared so far beyond whatever Shakespeare can have conceived.

How marvellous it all is ! Built not by saints and angels, but the work of men's hands ; cemented with men's honest blood and with a world of tears, welded by the best brains of centuries past ; not without the taint and

reproach incidental to all human work, but constructed on the whole with pure and splendid purpose. Human, and yet not wholly human, for the most heedless and the most cynical must see the finger of the Divine. Growing as trees grow, while others slept; fed by the faults of others as well as by the character of our fathers; reaching with the ripple of a resistless tide over tracts and islands and continents, until our little Britain woke up to find herself the foster-mother of nations and the source of united empires. Do we not hail in this less the energy and fortune of a race than the supreme direction of the Almighty? Shall we not, while we adore the blessing, acknowledge the responsibility? And while we see, far away in the rich horizons, growing generations fulfilling the promise, do we not own with resolution mingled with awe the honourable duty incumbent on ourselves? Shall we then falter or fail? The answer is not doubtful. We will rather pray that strength may be given us, adequate and abundant, to shrink from no sacrifice in the fulfilment of our mission; that we may be true to the high tradition of our forefathers; and that we may transmit their bequest to our children, aye, and, please God, to their remote descendants, enriched and undefiled, this blessed and splendid dominion. XXVII.

XXVIII

THE PRESS OF THE EMPIRE[1]

XXVIII. I HAVE had the great honour entrusted to me of proposing the health of our guests, coupled with the name of Sir Hugh Graham of Montreal. I confess that I feel overwhelmed by the importance of this occasion. It is not only that in this vast hall, speaking to so many remote tables, I feel something like a prophet in the desert—a minor prophet speaking to a number of believers in scattered oases. I dare say I shall not be able to make myself heard. I confidently expect that I shall not. But, at any rate, coming from so far, I am sure you will be merciful to one who has to address you under such trying circumstances.

There is another reason which fills me with a

[1] A speech delivered at the Banquet to the Delegates of the Imperial Press Conference, June 5, 1909.

[This speech has been disinterred as a memorial of a unique occasion. The assemblage of journalists from every part of the empire was unparalleled, and may well have contributed to the burst of imperial enthusiasm which has been the glory of this war. Not less remarkable and most vivid to the speaker were the physical conditions. The immense gallery, dotted with little tables like tents, looked like a vast encampment which no voice could hope to compass, and which was paralysing in its effect. Moreover, the deafening and incessant bombardment of fireworks outside was sufficient to complete his discomfiture. Few speakers can have been more afflicted.—Lord Rosebery's Note to privately printed edition.]

sense of awe. It is on account of the enormous importance of the gathering that I am speaking to. We have had conferences before—many of them conferences of great importance—at which the Prime Ministers and Ministers of the Empire have met together to consult on the great matters of policy which concern the Empire. It is no disparagement to these gatherings to say that I hold that this is more important still. I have the greatest respect for Prime Ministers and Ministers, but whatever their splendour may be when they are in the ascendant, they are essentially transient bodies—except, I believe, in Canada—while good newspapers are, or should be, eternal; and the power of a great newspaper, with the double function of guiding and embodying the public opinion of the province over which it exerts an influence, is immeasurably greater than that of any statesman can be. XXVIII.

I say that this is a meeting of vast importance. It reminds me, indeed, of one of the few recollections I have of my classical education at Eton. Those who, like me, have pursued the same arduous course may remember the description of the Cave of King Aeolus in the *Aeneid*—the cave in which all the winds of heaven were embraced, and over which King Aeolus held sway. At a touch or sign from him these gales swept out of the cavern—ready either as hurricanes to spread wreck and devastation all over the world, or else, in the form of balmy breezes, to bring blessing and health wherever they might attain. To-night I am in the cavern of the winds of the Empire. I do not pretend—God forbid that I should

XXVIII. pretend—to be the King Aeolus who controls these powers. That would rather belong to my noble friend on my right in the chair.[1] I may, at any rate, claim to be a humble, a timid —— (A voice, "Derby winner.") One does not feel like a Derby winner on these occasions. If the gentleman who interrupted me had ever been in the position of a Derby winner, he would conceive nothing so far remote from that feeling. I would rather claim, as I have said, to be an unworthy representative of King Aeolus. Well, I am quite sure when these winds go forth, when these powers are exerted over the Empire on your return from these islands, they will be exerted for the benefit of the Empire.

Now it is my duty, I suppose, to make a speech, and not immediately to sit down; but if I carried out my own sense of the occasion, if I carried out what I believe to be what is required on this occasion, I should confine myself to two words and then sit down. They would be only two words—and they are the simplest, and perhaps the sweetest, that can be heard by mortal ear—and yet they are the only two words in which I would sum up what I have to say to our guests from beyond the seas to-night. Those words are, "Welcome Home."

Yes, gentlemen, that is the motto of this occasion, "Welcome to your Home." Some of you, many of you, have never seen your home, and you will see something in the course of the next fortnight which I will not boast of, but which in its way is unmatched in the

[1] Lord Burnham.

world. You will see an ancient and a stately civilisation. You will see that embodied in our old abbeys and cathedrals, built in the age of faith, and surviving to testify that that faith is not dead in Britain. You will see it in the ancient colleges of Oxford and Cambridge and St. Andrews and Aberdeen, shrines of learning which are venerable not only from their antiquity. As you pass about the country you will see the little villages clustering about the Heaven-directed spires as they have clustered for centuries. You will see the ancient Mother of all Parliaments—the most venerable progenitor of free institutions—the House of Commons. I cannot promise you an even greater pleasure in seeing the House of Lords, because that will not be sitting during the period of your visit. Throughout the country you will see those old manor-houses where the squirearchy of Great Britain have lived for centuries, almost all of them inhabited long before the discovery of Australia, and some even before the discovery of America—a civilisation, a country life which I advise you to see on your present visit, because when you next come it may not be here for you to see it. Speeding onwards from these more rural scenes, from all this which is embodied history and which represents the antiquity and tradition of a thousand years, go on to the teeming communities which represent the manufactures, the energy, the alertness of the commercial life of Great Britain, and last of all, surrounding all and guarding all, you will see a prodigious armada, a prodigious but always inadequate armada. All these are

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XXVIII. yours as much as ours — your possession, your pride, and your home.

What do you bring to us? Because that is quite as important—it is, indeed, more important to us than what you can take from us. What is it you bring? You bring, I trust, the youth of your vigorous communities. You bring the candour, the acute criticism, the frankness of speech which belong to our young Dominions beyond the seas. You bring, I hope, the freshest news, the most recent information, as to all the aspirations and policies of the communities amongst which you live. You bring, I suspect, that same message which the Prince of Wales brought back after his tour round the Empire, and condensed into "Wake up, Old Country." I hope you come to tell us all the most recent news about the Dominions beyond the seas. I am quite aware that there is an ample representation here, from the third of the Empires which is contained in the British Empire, for there are three—the Western in Canada, the Southern in Australia, New Zealand, and the Cape, and the Eastern in India. I am quite aware that there is an ample representation from the Press of India on this occasion; but they will forgive me if I do not address myself to them, because what I have to say, spoken to that secular community, to that ancient civilisation, would have to be in a different note to that language which I can address to the representatives of the newer Empires. But I do hope—and I will say this word to the Indian delegation—they will not go away without having given some guidance to our democracy as

to the right method of governing and guiding that ancient civilisation of India, comprising numberless races, numberless religions, and an inscrutable whole of native populations which seem to understand us so much better than we can be said to understand them. Well, after all, the best you can bring us is the knowledge of yourself and your communities, because we never can know enough about them. XXVIII.

The other night I ventured to dream a dream, which is a very favourite practice of retired politicians. Thinking of that vast armada, the surplus of which is constantly scrapped at what seem to the taxpayer wholly inadequate prices, I could not help imagining how admirably some of these large ships might be used, not for the purposes of war, but for the purposes of peace. I thought to myself that, if I were the lay disposer of things in this country, I should like Parliament to vote supplies for two years, and then pack itself up in three or four of these obsolete warships and go for a trip in order to find out something about the Empire. You might object at once, *in limine*, to my scheme and say, "How would the country be governed while all the Ministers were absent?" I reply with confidence that they would be governed much as they are now —by the heads of the permanent departments; and I am sure that some of us would feel even greater confidence in the welfare of the country if it was under that permanent and well-ordered control. Should I include the House of Lords in this expedition? I think the House of Lords should accompany them, on condition of paying

XXVIII. their own expenses. For that, I may explain to my colonial visitors, is the great distinction between the House of Lords and the House of Commons. The House of Commons votes the taxes and the House of Lords pays them. Therefore, I think my proposal would place them on an equitable basis. Whatever their present relations may be, I should not be afraid of putting them in the same vessels, because I am confident that the wholesome discipline of the ocean would soon shake them down into conditions of parity, if not of amity.

Now let us imagine how our scheme would shape out. I would take them first to Newfoundland on a visit of homage to our most ancient and historic colony, where even our legislators would be able to find some constitutional problems which have been solved nowhere else. I would take them on to Canada, and I would give them many months of Canada. Partly for the sake of Canada and partly for the feeling that this holiday should be a leisurely one, I would give them a long time in Canada. They would have an immense dominion to rove over there. They might see many things that are new to them. They would see that, even in the most advanced democracy, a Prime Minister may hold his own against the successive buffets of innumerable general elections. They might see that in Canada wealth is not a crime, because some of the most glowing specimens of that obnoxious creature, the multi-millionaire, have been produced on that soil of liberty. But I will not pause to point out the varieties both

of political and physical sport in which our legislators might indulge in Canada. I would take them on to New Zealand, and in New Zealand they would see most of the policies at which they aim, and which they are endeavouring to construct in this country, being carried out under the advantages of a virgin soil with an absence—a total absence—of tradition and complexity. XXVIII.

I would take them on to Australia—that most marvellous of continents, where everything is abnormal—the marsupials and the duck-billed platypus—and point even to the fact that with a population which is about two-thirds of that of the capital of this country it is able to maintain seven capitals, seven Governments, and seven Ministries without any serious inconvenience. In our country we have always found one of each of these to be sufficient; and it shows the vigour of the young continent to be able to supply such a multiplicity of these onerous blessings. And if my expedition was disposed to take its leisure, it might indulge in the permanent sport of Australia—hunting for a Federal capital.

Then they should return through South Africa, where they would see the greatest success of the Imperial Government of Great Britain—the greatest and the most recent success—where a bold and magnanimous policy has healed the seams of war, and from the blood gallantly shed on both sides in the recent war—which might well have been a stream of unending division between two contending populations—has extracted the cement which has united the new federation. And if my excursionists were not

XXVIII. tired out, and if they were not too urgently summoned home—which I do not think would be the case—they might proceed northwards through Africa, avoiding Uganda, so as not to disturb the privacy of the late President of the United States. They might take their way home by Egypt, where they would see what British government wisely directed could do to rescue order from chaos.

The dream I recently dreamed is, I know, impracticable. I know that the fact that Parliament is sitting and constantly sitting is one of immeasurable consolation to every British tax-payer. And I am quite certain nobody could be found in England willing to lose the advantages of the society of our Parliament and of our legislators for a single month, much less for the eighteen months which I contemplate in my trip. But there would be counterbalancing advantages in regard to acquaintance with the Empire with which they have to deal.

To pass from that, I notice that you have—of course, I know that you have—solid and practical topics to deal with on this occasion. You have come here on no coffee-housing tour. You have come to see the old home and to do much practical work. I have looked at the list of your topics, and I must say it is with a feeling of sensible relief that I saw that tariff reform was not among them. It is not, of course, that I doubt that that interesting topic would have been exhaustively dealt with; but I understand it is desired that this should be a peaceful Con-

ference, and perhaps it is as well with that object that that particular topic should be eliminated. Then we come to the question of the closer communication between the Empire. That is one of the most vital of all. It is perfectly certain that if you are to build up the Empire or a triple Empire bound up in one, as I think it is—if you are to build up an Empire, you can only do it by the freest knowledge of each other's wants and ideas; that the whole opinion and the thought of the Empire, which should circulate like blood through the body politic, should, like blood, chiefly circulate from the heart. I remember when I was travelling about trying to make myself acquainted with these great dominions; when I was in Australia, which I am sorry to say I computed to-day was twenty-five years ago, I thought that cricket bulked a little too largely in the news that reached me from the ancient country; and I remember when I was in Canada, which I am ashamed to say is even a longer time ago, some thirty-six years, I thought that the news that reached Canada from the Mother Country did not somehow pass through a wholly favourable and friendly channel. Well, of course, all that is changed now. I do not know the existing state of things, but I am quite certain that no such abuse exists as I remember on that occasion. But if you want to bind the Empire close together your first and your main means must be by the cheapest methods of communication. The unwearied Mr. Henniker Heaton has sent me some very interesting papers bearing on this subject, but I do not think they

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XXVIII. are suited for an occasion such as this, but are more for your serious discussions in conference.

I pass, then, from the question of communication, merely making this remark in passing—no one can have lived as long as I have without seeing the enormous improvement in our British Press with regard to news from the Empire beyond the seas. Thirty or forty years ago you were satisfied with the jejune announcement that some Prime Minister, whose name you had never heard of, in some place with which you were imperfectly acquainted, had recently resigned office, and had been succeeded by somebody else. But I think you will now give us this credit as regards our English and Scottish Press, that you will find ample, well-informed articles on all subjects relating to colonial affairs, which show both an interest and an enthusiasm which is extremely gratifying to the Imperialist.

Now, you will forgive me if I come next and at once to what is by far the most vital topic that you will have to discuss at this Conference or which concerns our Empire as a whole—I mean that of Imperial defence. I do not know that in some ways I have ever seen a condition of things in Europe so remarkable, so peaceful, and in some respects so ominous as the condition which exists at this moment. There is a hush in Europe, a hush in which you may almost hear a leaf fall to the ground. There is an absolute absence of any questions which ordinarily lead to war. One of the great Empires which is sometimes supposed to menace peace is entirely engrossed with its own internal affairs. Another great

Eastern empire which furnished a perpetual problem to statesmen has taken a new lease of life and youth in searching for constitutional peace and reform. XXVIII.

All forebodes peace; and yet at the same time, combined with this total absence of all questions of friction, there never was in the history of the world so threatening and so overpowering a preparation for war. That is a sign which I confess I regard as most ominous. For forty years it has been a platitude to say that Europe is an armed camp, and for forty years it has been true that all the nations have been facing each other armed to the teeth, and that has been in some respects a guarantee of peace. Now, what do we see? Without any tangible reason we see the nations preparing new armaments. They cannot arm any more men on land, so they have to seek new armaments upon the sea, piling up these enormous preparations as if for some great Armageddon—and that in a time of profoundest peace. We live in the midst of what I think was called by Petrarch *tacens bellum*—a silent warfare, in which not a drop of blood is shed in anger, but in which, however, the last drop is extracted from the living body by the lancets of the European statesmen. There are features in this general preparation for war which must cause special anxiety to the friends of Great Britain and the British Empire, but I will not dwell upon these. I will only ask you who have come to this country to compare carefully the armaments of Europe with our preparations to meet them, and give your impressions to the Empire in return.

XXVIII. I myself feel confident in the resolution and power of this country to meet any reasonable conjunction of forces. But when I see this bursting out of navies everywhere, when I see one country alone asking for twenty-five millions of extra taxation for warlike preparation, when I see the absolutely unprecedented sacrifices which are asked from us on the same ground, I do begin to feel uneasy at the outcome of it all, and wonder where it will stop, or if it is nearly going to bring back Europe into a state of barbarism, or whether it will cause a catastrophe in which the working men of the world will say, " We will have no more of this madness, this foolery which is grinding us to powder."

We can and we will build Dreadnoughts—or whatever the newest type of ship may be—as long as we have a shilling to spend on them or a man to put into them. All that we can and will do; but I am not sure that even that will be enough, and I think it may be your duty to take back to your young dominions across the seas this message and this impression—that some personal duty and responsibility for national defence rests on every man and citizen. Yes, take that message back with you. Tell your people—if they can believe it—the deplorable way in which Europe is lapsing into militarism, and the pressure which is put upon this little island to defend its liberties—and yours. But take this message also back with you—that the old country is right at heart, that there is no failing or weakness in heart, and that she rejoices in renewing her youth in her giant dominions

beyond the seas. For her own salvation she must look to herself, and that failing her, she must look to you. XXVIII.

Well, I would ask your pardon for having detained you so long. I know that, whatever may be the outcome of this visit, you will return strengthened to your high functions as the guides of your communities in matters of information. And you will return convinced of the necessity of the mission of that communion of Commonwealths which constitutes the British Empire. Having come, as I hope, believers in that faith, you will return to your homes missionaries of Empire—missionaries of the most extensive and the most unselfish Empire which is known to history.

I will end as I began. After all, I might speak to you for hours, and I could only sum up what I have to say in the two simple words with which I began, "Welcome Home"—welcome home to the home of your language, your liberties, and your race, welcome home to the source of your Parliaments, of your free institutions, and of this immeasurable Empire, welcome home to the supreme head of all these dominions, your Sovereign and mine, who is not merely the King of Great Britain, but the King of hearts; welcome home to this and to anything besides that we in all brotherhood and affection can offer you. Welcome home!

V

GENIUS LOCI

XXIX

ETON [1]

This is, I think, in some respects the most remarkable dinner at which I have had the honour of assisting. So brilliant is the gathering that I would almost seem to require a pair of smoked glasses to contemplate the various dazzling celebrities who owe their various successes to Eton, and who are assembled round this table. And I should be for my part extremely uneasy at my position in the chair were it not that I well understand that, on an occasion like this, the best service a chairman can render is to say as little as possible and to obliterate himself. I remember a story that the late Lord Granville used to tell me—for dinners to outgoing Viceroys and Governors have not been hitherto unknown—they are habitual. Lord Granville was a guest at a dinner to an outgoing Governor of very indifferent powers of speaking, and as the Governor-designate laboured through his speech, Lord Granville, in sheer weariness, cast his eye on the notes of the speech that lay before him and saw marked in

[1] Speech at the farewell dinner given by Old Etonians on October 28, 1898, to the Earl of Minto, Governor-General of Canada, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Viceroy of India, and the Rev. J. E. C. Welldon, Bishop of Calcutta.

XXIX. red ink, copiously underlined, the words, "Here dilate on the cotton trade." I forget the end of the story, but with a man of Lord Granville's readiness of resource, it is not difficult to surmise that those notes disappeared on the instant, and that the orator very soon followed their example. I shall not be guilty to-night, and I trust that the numerous Viceroys who bristle around me and who are announced to speak will not either, of dilating on the cotton trade, and I think that that is a course that will meet with your approbation.

But there is another reason that makes it impossible to speak long on this occasion. There is a theory, well known to the Foreign Office, that every ship of war is, wherever it may be found, the territory of the country to which it belongs, and on that hypothesis I hold that this apartment, which bears all the characteristics of a London coffee-room of the most refined and brilliant kind, is, after all, Eton territory — is Eton; and no one who has had experience of the debates of Parliament, or even of the conversations of Etonians when we were Etonians, will think for a moment otherwise than that brevity is the soul of wit. The words "rot" and "bosh" would have been applied — not, perhaps, improperly—to any one who exceeded the limits of perhaps three or four minutes. This leads me into a vein of thought which is not without its complications. If this is Eton territory, one feels as if the celebration should be essentially Etonian in more ways than one, and I seem to see, through a glass darkly, the vision of our

Viceroys and Bishop-designate drinking "long glass" as part of their initiation. On the present occasion there is no "long glass" present, or I am sure that I should receive your support in moving that that ceremony should be undergone. XXIX.

Yet, after all, there are circumstances in this gathering that are not so hilarious. It is pretty clear that we are all of us a long way from Eton, a long way from "bosh," a long way from "rot," and the other associations that I have endeavoured to recall. We are not, indeed, without connections with Eton. We are honoured to-night with the presence of the Provost and the Headmaster; but otherwise our associations with Eton are getting somewhat dim and distant. They are represented chiefly by the presence of our relations in the first, second, and third generation who are privileged to be pupils within its walls, and I am not sure that there is not an intensified feeling of gloom at finding that you have among your juniors at Eton a Viceroy of India and a Bishop of Calcutta going forth in the full maturity of their powers to discharge those important functions. But, after all, that is a fate that had to come to all of us at some time or another. We had to draw a lengthening chain, lengthening daily as regards our connection with Eton. We must be prepared to see our successors grow up, and we must—it sounds trite to say so—be prepared to feel a little older every day. But there is one consolation in getting older as an Etonian—that you keep the pride that has always been in you since you went to Eton, the pride of the prowess of your school.

XXIX. I never knew but one Etonian who said he did not like Eton, and he very soon went to the devil. At any rate, whether we are privileged to be Viceroys or Bishops, or have to lead a life of greater obscurity, we at any rate may glory in this—that we belong to the school that with an everlasting current of eternal flow turns out the Viceroys and the Bishops and the Ministers of the Empire that the Empire requires.

The Duke of Wellington said—and I am sure you will expect this quotation—that in the playing-fields of Eton—he did not know how far they were to extend, what deserts they were to encompass—the battle of Waterloo was won. But a great deal more than the battle of Waterloo has been won in the playing-fields of Eton, and that somewhat presumptuous list that is printed on the back of our bill of fare calls to mind how in at least two great dependencies of the Empire—the Indian Empire and, if I may so call it, the Canadian Empire—Eton has played a conspicuous part. What, for example, would Canada have done without Eton, when out of the last six Viceroys all but one are Etonians ? And although my friend Lord Aberdeen is an unhappy exception, I do not doubt but if he could have been he would have been an Etonian. Is there not something pathetic to us in our Alma Mater going on turning out the men who govern the Empire almost, as it were, unconsciously ? But, although I speak in the presence of the Provost, of the Headmaster, of Mr. Durnford, of Mr. Ainger, of Mr. Marindin, and of other great guides of Etonian thought, they will not, I think, dispute the pro-

position when I say that, however great the learning that Etonians take from Eton may be, the highest and the best part of their education is not the education of the brain, but the education of the character. It is character that has made the Empire what it is and the rulers of the Empire what they are. I will not dilate longer on this theme. I wish only to play a slightly conspicuous part on this occasion, and, after all, if we were once to begin to dilate on the merits and the glories of Eton, we should not separate to-night. XXIX.

There is another reason that appeals to me to curtail these remarks. One of our distinguished guests, though he was born and nurtured and trained at Eton, has up to very lately occupied the position of headmaster of an establishment which I perhaps ought not to name on this occasion, but which I am sorry to say is painfully present to our minds about the middle of July. I have no doubt Mr. Welldon's Etonian experience has moulded Harrow into something more like Eton than it used to be. Of course, of that I have no personal experience or knowledge; but this I do know, that, making a great sacrifice, as men call sacrifice, in position and perhaps prestige, giving up one of the most envied of all English positions, he is going out to take the Bishopric of Calcutta under circumstances which must commend him to all his brother Etonians. He is going to fill the see of Heber, animated, as I believe, by the principles of that noble hymn which Heber wrote, and I firmly believe that one result of his stay in India will be that he will have

XXIX. imparted a new breath of inspiration to Indian Christianity.

I next come to my old college contemporary, Lord Minto. To most of us he is better known as Melgund, to some of us as Rowley. Lord Minto's position raises in my mind a controversy which has never ceased to rage in it since I was thirteen years old. I have never been able to make out which has the greatest share in the government of this Empire—Scotland or Eton. I am quite prepared to give up our fighting powers to Ireland, because when we have from Ireland Wolseley and Kitchener and Roberts I am sure that Scotland cannot claim to compete. But when, as in Lord Minto's case, Scotland and Eton are combined, you have something so irresistible that it hardly is within the powers of human eloquence to describe it. Lord Minto comes of a governing family—indeed at one time it was thought to be too governing a family. Under former auspices it was felt that the Elliots perhaps bulked too largely in the administration of the nation. At any rate, whether it was so or not, it was achieved by their merits, and there has been a Viceroy Lord Minto already. There have been innumerable distinguished members of the family in the last century, and there has also been a person, I think, distinguished above all others — that Hugh Elliot who defeated Frederick the Great in repartee at the very summit of his reputation, and went through every adventure that a diplomatist can experience. And now Lord Minto goes to Canada. I am quite certain, from his experience, from his

character and knowledge, from his popularity, that he is destined to make an abiding mark. XXIX.

Lastly, I take the case of our friend who is going to undertake the highest post of the three, because, after all, it is one of the highest posts that any human being can occupy. He goes to it in the full flower of youth, and of manhood, and of success—a combination to which every one must wish well. Lord Curzon has this additional advantage in his favour—that he is reviving a dormant class, the Irish peerage. Some might think that that implied some new legislative or constitutional development on the part of her Majesty's Government, but it would be out of my place to surmise that to be the case. But, at any rate, sure I am of this—that Lord Curzon of Kedleston has shown in his position at the Foreign Office qualities of eloquence, of debating power, of argument, which have hardly been surpassed in the career of any man of his standing. I cannot say—it would be difficult to say—that he has done so in defence of difficult positions, because that would be at once to raise a political issue of the very gravest kind. But I am quite sure that no Under-Secretary has ever had to defend in the House of Commons any but positions of difficulty, and I think the foreign situations are always of that character. I am quite sure that when Lord Curzon has had to defend these situations he has defended them with not less than his customary success. He has devoted special study to India. I believe he has even entered into amicable relations with neighbouring potentates. He will pass from his

XXIX. home of Kedleston in Derbyshire to the exact reproduction of Kedleston in Government House, Calcutta. We all hope that in his time India may enjoy a prosperity which has of late been denied to her, and that immunity from war and famine and pestilence may be the blessed prerogative of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty.

I have only one word more to say before I sit down, and it is this—I think we all must have in our minds, at least some of us must have in our minds, some immortal words on the occasion of this gathering so interesting and even so thrilling. Do you all remember the beginning of the tragedy of *Macbeth*? The first witch says :

> When shall we three meet again,
> In thunder, lightning, or in rain ?

The second witch replies :

> When the hurly-burly's done,
> When the battle's lost and won.

Surely these significant words must be present to us to-night. You are sending out three eminent men on three vitally important missions to different parts of the Empire. Two of them, at any rate, go for periods of five years, and we must think even in this moment of triumph and of joy of the period of their return, " When shall we three meet again ? " That must be in their minds too ; but this at least we may be sure of : if we are here present, or some of us, to greet them on their return when the hurly-burly's done and when the battle is not lost—for we exclude that—when the battle is won,

they will have a tale of stewardship which is nobly undertaken and triumphantly achieved, one which has helped to weld the Empire which we all have it at heart to maintain, one which will redound to their own credit, and which will do if even but a little—for there is so much to be added to—to add to the glory and the credit of our mother Eton. XXIX.

XXX

THE ROYAL PALACE OF WHITEHALL[1]

XXX. To-DAY we meet amidst an exhibition relating to Whitehall Palace. That building has a strong fascination for all who care about the history and traditions of London, if only as recalling the tragic scene of Charles I.'s execution. But the information regarding this which Macaulay calls "the most celebrated palace in which the sovereigns of England have ever dwelt" is not so copious as could be wished. We have, indeed, the interesting history of Canon Sheppard, and the fascinating monograph of Mr. Loftie, to both of which I have returned with zest. We have the plan of Fisher engraved by Vertue, which is a priceless document. I have, moreover, been favoured with manuscript notes by Lord Welby, who has long been interested in this subject, and having spent long and laborious days, with an observant eye and a retentive memory, on the site of the Cockpit of Whitehall, has become imbued with the atmosphere of Whitehall Palace. Under his welcome guidance I have explored the sites and the remains.

[1] Presidential Address delivered at the tenth Annual Meeting of the London Topographical Society, 1908.

> Together we, ere the high lawns appeared, XXX.
> Under the opening eyelids of the dawn,
> We drove afield,

but not quite so early as the quotation would imply.

Go ye and do likewise, I will say. It is an interesting occupation, though in these days of excursions and alarms you must not mind being subjects of suspicion to the police, more especially if you belong to what used to be called the gentler sex. I thought that Lord Welby and I were somewhat attentively watched by the officials when we lingered in some especially interesting spot, until they judged from our appearance that we were not political women in disguise.

I have endeavoured thus to frame for myself some idea of the nature and geography of the old Palace of Whitehall, and would invite you to accompany me in a brief and necessarily hurried examination of that site. All people who are experts, or who really understand the subject, are requested to leave the room at this point, as I am confident that I shall make a thousand mistakes, both from ignorance and my want of understanding in dealing with plans. And from the remnant that will remain I beg for indulgence, while I offer a few remarks on this structure so interesting and so elusive.

I have called it interesting, and the interest, I think, speaks for itself.

The London residence of thirty successive Archbishops of York, culminating in the magnificent Wolsey, it is seized by his arbitrary master,

xxx. who is happy, here and at Hampton Court, to rest in the warm nests of his fallen Minister. Taking possession, Henry changes the name, as the gossiping gentlemen tell us in Shakespeare's play :

> You must no more call it York Place, that's past,
> For since the Cardinal fell that title's lost :
> 'Tis now the King's and called Whitehall.

Henry dies at Whitehall. It seems the favourite palace of the Stuarts : James and Charles I. both plan sumptuous palaces on its site. Then one bitter January day Charles walks out of one of the windows of the Banqueting House to meet his doom. Cromwell reigns and dies there. The place, one would think, would be too full of horror and tragedy for Charles II. to live there, but there he spends his careless hours, unequally divided between political craft and reckless voluptuousness, on the site where his father was beheaded. There he too dies, and Vanity Fair is scattered. Three years later a boat puts out from the Terrace and takes away the last Stuart king. The dynasty floats away in that wherry into space. Then there arrives a Dutch prince with an asthma which forbids him to live so near the river, the palace is deserted, and soon afterwards burned down by another native of Holland, a laundress drying linen in her room. A casual ailment disestablishes the ancient palace. And so the glory passes from Whitehall, and it dwindles into a realm of red tape.

I have also called it elusive, and it is elusive for more reasons than one. Considering the celebrity of the Palace, we have few pictures and

views of it. The prints connected with it are rather those of what might have been than what was—illustrations of Inigo Jones's sublime plans for a palace which never existed. Another reason for the elusiveness is that though the royal apartments were burned down, the great mass of the palace seems to have escaped the fire of 1698, which is supposed to have put an end to the structure, and to have gradually crumbled away under the operations of the builders, so that parts of the palace might lurk in the most unsuspected places. But London crumbles fast, and, as a matter of certainty, besides the Banqueting House, a couple of cellars and as many windows are all that can be described with any certainty as existing parts of Whitehall Palace. xxx.

Lord Welby and, I think, Mr. Loftie are inclined to think that behind the façade of Barry which represents the street side of the Privy Council Office and the Treasury, may be cloaked portions of the old palace which were not destroyed, but refaced. He has, indeed, a vague recollection of having been shown a small room with a painted ceiling, in the Education Office, which was said to have formed part of the great Marlborough's lodgings in the palace. And below that building is a court and cellar. The court, till recently, contained a tank with C.R. 1666 on it, now moved to Kensington, while the cellar is hallowed by tradition as the place in which the cocks were kept for the battles of the neighbouring Cockpit. Cockfights were consecrated contests in this region before they were superseded by the more

xxx. exciting struggles of political humanity at Westminster. Within living memory, Westminster Abbey itself was the scene of the battles. About twelve years ago, a gentleman wrote to me to say that he knew of an old man then living who, seventy years before, had carried two cocks, the property of his uncle, to one of the cloisters under Westminster Abbey, and witnessed a cockfight there in the presence of a select company. He added the detail that the keeper of the Cockpit under the cloister was known as "China" Hall, from the fact of his having a glass eye—a detail which may identify him to those learned in the traditions of the sport.

But the Cockpit at Whitehall was something much more august. It was on the site of the present Treasury under a part of the Treasury Board Room, under the Financial Secretary's room, and an adjacent room facing the Parade. For a long time after the demolition of the Cockpit, about 1733, the buildings erected on its site were called by its name, and the King's speech used to be read to the supporters of the Government in what was called the Cockpit, at least as late as the death of Mr. Pitt in 1806. Hence some confusion of ideas. The present internal passage, leading from Whitehall into the Treasury, corresponds almost exactly with the old passage to the Cockpit, and it is here that may be seen the two Tudor windows which we may reasonably suppose to belong to the old Palace. Then adjacent to and surrounding the Cockpit was a large residential building to which it gave its name. Here lived for a time Oliver

Cromwell, Monk, Duke of Albemarle, and Princess, afterwards Queen Anne. It is characteristic of those careless times that so illustrious a lodging should have had so homely a title. But in truth there was little, I suspect, in the appearance of Whitehall that betokened a palace, except the Banqueting House and the Gates. It was rather a fortuitous collection of buildings, erected haphazard under pressure or for convenience, neither sightly nor dignified. xxx.

The noblest entrance to this labyrinth, as intricate as a copy of the *Times* newspaper, was by the Holbein Gate, which stretched at right angles from the porch of Dover House into a narrow street, King Street, which passed through the Palace from Charing Cross to Westminster.

King Street, we may note in passing, as it has now disappeared, originally extended from Charing Cross through Whitehall to the King's Palace at Westminster, and was so named because it was the direct road from the Palace to the Houses of Parliament and the Abbey. Through it, Elizabeth, James, and Charles I. would make their way to Parliament, as well as the later republicans; but the destruction of Whitehall Palace by fire, and the growing popularity of carriages, caused the narrow road to lose its character as a royal way, being superseded by a new and broader thoroughfare. For some time Cromwell, while he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, had a house in King Street; and other notable residents include Howard of Effingham, Lord High Admiral at the time of the Armada, Edmund Spenser the poet, Sackville the poet

xxx. and statesman, afterwards Earl of Dorset, and Carew, poet and author of some elegant songs. The street was pulled down in 1900 to make way for some new Government buildings.

Of the famous Holbein Gate it is enough to say that it was designed by Holbein for Henry VIII., that it contained a passage to the Banqueting House, through which Charles I. entered his palace for the last time, and that it was eventually carted away by the Butcher Duke of Cumberland to Windsor, to be placed at the end of the Long Walk, since which nothing has been heard of it. In entering the Holbein Gate one would leave the Banqueting House behind one's left—adjoining the Banqueting House was the formal entrance to the Palace, and then the Palace rambled away into a wilderness of offices, laundries, and storehouses, towards Charing Cross. For the Palace precincts comprehended what we call the Horse Guards, which was then called the Tilt Yard (where the Guard, I think, is still called the Tilt Guard), and Scotland Yard, where the Kings of Scotland did homage for their English possessions, but which has other associations for us.

Stretching on the left of the Holbein Gate, and in a line with it, were the Government offices. Few and evil they seem to have been. But we may look back, not without envy, to the days when the whole machinery of government was compact in so small a space, as we contemplate the gigantic palaces of bureaucracy along which the ruminating senator now walks to his daily duties. These narrower offices looked towards

Westminster: in front of them lay the Privy Garden adorned with statues and a great sundial; adjoining this was the great bowling-green, where Richmond Terrace now stands, secure in its locked gates. xxx.

At the end of the public offices, at right angles to them, and parallel to the river, there ran out a long stone gallery. This gallery, or rather the lodgings which screened it from the Garden, formed the enclosure of the Privy Garden on the river side. At the end of that stone gallery were the sumptuous apartments of the Duchess of Portsmouth, of a splendour unexampled in England, apartments which had been twice or thrice pulled down and rebuilt to suit her caprice, rich with tapestries, and cabinets, and furniture of massive silver. Over the stone gallery was probably that famous chamber which Evelyn describes in a solemn and eloquent passage when he depicts the gambling and the wantonness of the last Sunday of Charles II.'s life.

From the river side of this stone gallery one could, if I read the map rightly, pass into that part of the building which faced the river. Here were the apartments of the King and Queen, as well as of a multifarious collection of other people, Chiffinches, Killigrews, and the royal sempstress, whoever she may have been, and probably a host of others, as Vertue's plan only shows the ground floor. Of this view of the Palace, the best representation that I know is a picture at Windsor Castle of Charles II. witnessing the Lord Mayor's procession of state barges from the river terrace of Whitehall Palace. The front

xxx. is neither noble nor dignified, but it faces the Thames, as befits the palace of the King of England.

Let us now return to the Holbein Gate and take a further survey.

Standing, then, where there is now the porch of Dover House, and looking towards Westminster, in 1680, we should have been under the Holbein Gate; to our left would have stretched the public offices, and onwards from there towards Westminster, beyond Richmond Terrace, lay, first the Privy Garden and then the Bowling Green. On our right the line of building would be what it is now, only that it would represent, not public buildings, but a multifarious collection of Palace lodgings, through which pierced the passage to the Cockpit, and behind which lay the tennis court, which was still standing in 1804. Those buildings, if I am not mistaken, would stretch nearly as far as Downing Street, where there was another gate, the King's Gate, as formal and palatial as the Holbein Gate, and this was the boundary of the Palace towards Westminster.

So much for what lay between the Holbein Gate and the King's Gate. But the regular entrance to the Palace was at neither of these, but at the Charing Cross end of the Banqueting House, where Carrington House used to stand. Here one entered a spacious courtyard, which still exists in whole or in part, which a Frenchman, Rochford, who visited it in the reign of Charles II., describes as a "great court surrounded by buildings without either symmetry or beauty worth mentioning," which was, I fear,

the general type of building which prevailed at Whitehall. One part of this court was flanked by the Banqueting House. On the opposite side, underneath what was the Board of Trade, was a wine-cellar, which still exists. Passing through this court towards the river we enter a long narrow passage, where we had kitchens and pantries and butteries on the left, and on the right the Great Hall and the Chapel. At the end we should come out on the river at Whitehall Palace stairs, and take boat, as now we should take a hansom or some mechanical conveyance. If we did not care to do that, we should turn to the right, and threading a maze of privy kitchens and the like, arrive at the apartments of their Majesties. xxx.

I think now that we have perambulated all of the Palace that would have interested us. There were, however, no less than three other courts nearer Charing Cross than the one we have traversed. One lay between that and Scotland Yard; the other two were both called Scotland Yard. They were probably nothing but the dependencies of the Palace, mean buildings put up as convenience dictated. But their appearance is only matter of surmise on my part, as I cannot find anything certain in my books or guides on the subject, though a map in the corner of Vertue's might almost seem to indicate that the great Cardinal's residence lay more here than on the site of the King's palace. If that were so, here may have been remains not devoid of grandeur.

Whitehall Palace was then, I imagine, a vast

xxx. area covered with structures which, to say the least, were unimposing, a maze of lodgings and offices with two stately gateways, and in the midst the Banqueting House, with its tragic memories, a splendid monument recalling, not merely the execution of Charles I., but a fragment of what might have been. With these exceptions there is, perhaps, nothing to regret in the Palace but its site, incomparably noble, facing the river on the one side, and the Parks, ending in a vista of country-side, on the other.

The Banqueting House recalls what might have been. How would Inigo Jones have filled this site? For that he made at least two plans, for James I. and for Charles I. The first was probably his ideal; it may have been only his ideal, and one that he never hoped to realise. The second was framed to suit the compromised fortunes of Charles I. "It was to be," says Mr. Loftie, "of only half the dimensions, and was to be studiously plain. Whereas the Banqueting House was one of the plainest and least costly features of the 1619 design, it would appear in the new view as one of the most elaborately ornamented."

Let us dwell for a moment on the sublime dream of the earlier plan. The space to be covered was 1152 by 874 feet. The vastness of this may be computed by comparison. Some of us have seen the gigantic structure of the Escorial. That is 680 feet in length. So much for quantity. As for quality, it is not possible, at any rate for one who is not an expert, to describe architectural features in words, but the

design has always excited the enthusiasm of architects, and even of meaner persons. xxx.

Externally, says Mr. Fergusson, it would have surpassed the Louvre or Versailles, or any building of the kind. The Thames front, says Mr. Loftie, shows Inigo Jones at his best: the North front towards Charing Cross was studiously plain. There was to be one huge, central court, and six great side courts. One of these, called the Persian Court, was to have been circular. This seems a strange conception, but it has been greatly admired by those who should know. A court of similar shape exists, if my memory does not play me a trick, in the unfinished palace of Charles V. at Grenada, whence Inigo may have taken the idea. I remember thinking that it must have been intended for a private bull-ring, as it is difficult for the amateur to imagine with satisfaction the shape of the rooms surrounding it. But genius devises, and mortals cannot always interpret. The name Persian would come, as Mr. Loftie explains, from the figures; male figures being called Persian, where female are known as Caryatides. Strangely enough, architects find a difficulty in fixing exactly where the Banqueting House would have been in his plan.

The philosopher, who knows that an individual can only occupy one bed at a time, may ask what useful end so prodigious a habitation could serve. For the Escorial, with its 11,000 rooms, more or less, was a monastery as well as a church, as was Mafra, which is, I believe, at least equally vast. But two considerations

xxx. are to be remembered. The first is that the public offices would have been placed in the palace. In those days that would not have been much; in these it would result in the King himself being crowded out. The second is that it was the practice of that century for a great number of more or less noble families to live in the royal palace. We see on the map the numbers that lived at Whitehall, and if we had the plan of the upper floors, they would no doubt be sensibly swelled. Versailles was a rabbit warren of the aristocracy. Hundreds of courtiers lived under the palace roof, and the breath of an occupant was scarcely out of his body before the King was beset with applications for the reversion of the apartment. Had Charles II. accommodated at Whitehall the courtiers who craved for lodgings, or even given a home to the royalists who had suffered ruin for their fidelity to him, the palace of Inigo Jones would have been none too large.

James I. could not afford to build a palace, Charles I. still less. Charles II. did not care to disturb his harem at Whitehall, and preferred to raise a palace at Winchester. When William III. came to the throne he seriously thought, Canon Sheppard tells us, of rebuilding the palace after the designs of Inigo Jones, and a model was prepared for inspection. The idea was again put forward after the fire of 1698. But it can have been with little hope or expectation. For William III. wanted every shilling that he could raise for his Continental policy, and it would have been too much to expect even the most peaceful

and opulent of monarchs to construct a splendid palace where he neither could nor would live. It was only Louis XIV. who could raise great palaces while he waged great wars, wringing money for both out of a suffering nation, though Frederick the Great built a sumptuous palace after the Seven Years' War, to show that there was still some cash left in Prussia. We need not regret that we had no Louis XIV. at that time. For the building of Versailles may not unfairly be reckoned among the operative causes of the French Revolution. xxx.

Some years ago, when it was contemplated to build a new War Office at Whitehall, it was the hope of many, whose wishes were voiced in Parliament by Lord Wemyss, that part at least of Inigo Jones's noble design might be utilised. But that was not to be. It was, for reasons which I forget, impossible. All pleasant things are impossible: few ideals are ever realised. One may, too, look back with regret, if it be ever worth while to look back with regret, to the opportunity lost by Barry when the new Houses of Parliament were erected. Then we might at least, as Mr. Loftie points out, have enjoyed the noble river front planned in 1619; and it is no disparagement to the Gothic mass which now faces the Thames, rich as it is in many respects, to say that we should have gained greatly by the exchange.

And so I take leave of this interesting theme with the hope that I have not wearied or bewildered you.

There are, however, one or two considerations

xxx. which it irresistibly suggests. The first is that though glorious under Henry VIII., Whitehall remains connected chiefly with the name of Stuart. We call that name unlucky, not with scientific accuracy, for it had luck enough, though its bearers did not know how to use it, or threw it wantonly away up to the very end. Its princes persistently misgoverned Great Britain when it was not difficult to govern, and ended by sacrificing an empire for a Mass. We should admire the tenacity of conscience as compared with the more jaunty example set by their relative and ancestor Henry of Navarre, did we not know that, when it was too late, Charles Edward abandoned the Mass with easy alacrity. Be that as it may, we note that not merely the glory, but the actual habitation of Whitehall ceased with these hapless Stuarts. They seemed indeed to be linked with the scene of their great tragedy, as if their fortune for good or for ill were inextricably mixed up with it. When they left it they left their kingdom. The boat that floated James down the river in December 1688 took his crown with it, as well as the last occupying owner, to use a modern political phrase, of Whitehall.

The next consideration is this — that they would have done well in their own interest to give Inigo Jones a free hand. Stately monuments soften the judgement of posterity upon their authors. There are, for example, illustrious buildings at Rome connected with names and with transactions which are subjects of general condemnation, much alleviated, however, when

we see the palaces and churches which have been thus bequeathed for our admiration. We forget, for example, the sale of indulgences as we gaze at St. Peter's. Had the Stuarts spent the money they squandered otherwise in realising the plan of Inigo Jones, it would have stood in mitigation of the judgement of history. The recording angel of architecture would have blotted out many of their misdeeds with a grateful tear, and we, as we passed by the stately façade of the palace, would have said, "They were bad kings, but after all they left us that." Now, no one thinks of them at all, till the periodical discussion arises as to the posture of Charles I. during decapitation, or the method by which he came from the Banqueting House to the scaffold. xxx.

The last thought that arises is this—the transitoriness of London. Two hundred and ten years ago a vast palace was standing at Whitehall, and now nothing remains of it except the noble hall of Inigo Jones. We survive our London. We realise in middle life that all around is changed—the houses that one knew in childhood seem to be in the minority. And when in a long walk one comes on some untouched nook, it is with the same surprise that one finds a patch of snow under a hedgerow after a thaw. And if "some power the gift could give us" to see once the London of our childhood, the contrast would, I believe, be greater even than we imagine. Yes, we live in a city almost as fleeting as an encampment; we do not strike our tents, but our lease ends just as our judiciously constructed house is coming to pieces. Let our Society watch

xxx. the process vigilantly, as I believe the London County Council also watches it with more authority and ampler means, and garner up carefully what is worth preserving of a great city, built not for time and posterity, but for the business exigencies of a leasehold tenure.

XXXI

EPSOM [1]

When I first came to live at Epsom, a quarter of a century ago, it was a little sleepy town, surrounded by long stretches of down and common. Its perennial slumber was broken twice a year by race meetings, when the followers and camp followers of the Turf stormed the neighbourhood during a few agitated days, then struck their tents and left the town, sodden and exhausted. Thereafter the calm recommenced, and the inhabitants could saunter over miles of open turf to breathe the purest air in England. But the memory of those six days of carnival kept off the speculative builder and his serious clients. Thus the town remained rural and old-fashioned. Now all that is changed. The clients of the builder have reconsidered their objections, and so he has come and cut into the lanes and hedges. A gaunt asylum shrouds the misery of hundreds or thousands of the mad patients of London. One or two commons are enclosed. The stray edges of greenery, which were the heritage of the wayfarer, are being gradually fenced in. A new

[1] A preface contributed to *Epsom : its History and its Surroundings*, by Gordon Home, 1901.

XXXI. railroad, traversing a rural desert, lands its stray passengers on to a belated bull-ring, which tops the downs with its aggressive bulk. It is all, I suppose, necessary, nay inevitable. But these changes have killed the old Epsom. The new Epsom is only a fragment of the past, and only a fragment of the future.

Long ago, Epsom was fashionable. Charles the Second raced here and played bowls here. Prince George of Denmark, the husband of Queen Anne, came here and drank the waters. Frederick Prince of Wales lived here, enjoyed hawking on the Downs, and, it is said, fought a chimney-sweep, sustaining defeat. But the glorious epoch of Epsom seems to have ended with the seventeenth century. The stay of Frederick Prince of Wales at Epsom was in its unfashionable days ; perhaps he only came to court obscurity when in conflict with his father. It is difficult indeed to ascertain when he was at Epsom, in spite of the strong local tradition and the statement of Horace Walpole that he actually owned Durdans. Probably he went on a visit to Lord Guilford, who did own Durdans, and who was a Lord of his Bedchamber. But in any case the chalybeate or cathartic glories of Epsom had then passed away.

When and whence were those glories ? It appears that in the later years of Queen Elizabeth the waters had been obscurely, indeed parochially, drunk ; and in the middle of the seventeenth century foreigners were said to come from abroad for that purpose. It was, however, the demolition of the neighbouring Palace of Nonsuch

which launched Epsom on its brief career as a watering-place; for the great structure furnished much building material, and so was a quarry out of which were erected dwellings in a sumptuous style, new to the country village. This was in 1670, for in that year Charles II. had given Nonsuch to Barbara Villiers, who lost no time in converting it into cash. XXXI.

Our local historian, Mr. Pownall, who published his little book in 1825, lingers fondly over those glorious times. "Soon after the improvements made by Mr. Parkhurst at the Wells (about 1690), the village was enlarged to a considerable extent. It became the centre of fashion; several houses were erected for lodgings, and yet the place would not contain all the visitors, many of whom were obliged to seek for accommodation in the neighbouring villages. Taverns, at that time reputed to be the largest in England, were opened; sedan chairs and numbered coaches attended. There was a public breakfast, with dancing and music, every morning at the wells. There was also a ring, as in Hyde Park; and on the downs, races were held daily at noon; with cudgelling and wrestling matches, foot races, etc., in the afternoon. The evenings were usually spent in private parties, assemblies, or cards; and we may add, that neither Bath nor Tunbridge ever boasted of more noble visitors than Epsom, or exceeded it in splendour, at the time we are describing."

In spite of this glowing description, I am inclined to doubt whether Epsom was ever fashionable in the sense in which that epithet is

XXXI. applied to Tunbridge Wells or Bath. It was probably the haunt rather of the middle classes than of noble visitors. That at least is the impression left by Shadwell's coarse comedy. It may be noted, too, that a great number of letters from great people were dated from Bath, but few or none from Epsom. The houses of Bath, too, are redolent with the tradition of sublime names. There are scarcely any such at Epsom. Lord Berkeley, no doubt, had his house and entertained his friends. We have a glimpse of Lord Buckhurst and Sir Charles Sedley flirting with Nell Gwynne in the High Street. Lord Baltimore led a debauched life at Woodcote. Lord Lyttelton closed a debauched life at Pit Place. But these noble names almost exhaust the record. And the visitors to the town who believed in the virtue of the waters, while they were cured at least as much by air, abstinence, exercise, and a healing faith, as by the merits of the well, were, it may be surmised, in the main what were called "cits." This does not imply that they were not as gay and as profitable as the gouty statesmen and nobles who sought health and gambling tables elsewhere.

In spite of Prince George of Denmark the decline of Epsom began, we are told by our historian, in 1704. The "knavery of an apothecary" was, it appears, sufficient to put an end to our career of brilliancy. This miscreant bought land, sunk a well, erected ballrooms, gambling rooms and a pump. Shops too "for milliners, jewellers and toymen," and a bowling-green were there. His advertisements were indeed alluring.

There was a " variety of raffling-shops, attended every day by a fine consort of musick " ; there were cockfights and horse-races ; there were also empty shops for " a bookseller, pictures, a haberdasher of hats, shoemaker, fishmonger and butcher, with conveniences for several other trades." The centre of these attractions he called the New Wells. Where this guilty paradise was situated I do not know ; but as a source of health it was deceptive. " The water of the New Wells did not possess any virtue, and consequently those who drank it did not derive any benefit therefrom." So sighs Pownall, but as nothing was charged for the waters, it may perhaps be said that their want of quality constituted no direct fraud on the public. Worse than all, the old and virtuous wells, full of healing, " grew into unmerited disrepute, for want of a distinction." Still in all this, though there may have been folly and presumption, there was no actual iniquity. The crime of the man of medicine remains to be told. He procured a lease of the Old Wells and locked them up till he died in 1727. Are there any waters in the world which could triumph over treatment of this kind ? XXXI.

Toland, who wrote in 1711, under the hollow and glittering reign of the wicked apothecary, penned a glowing description. And yet, though the scene that he describes is brilliant and animated, within four years of this period Epsom was, according to Pownall, gradually deserted owing to the " knavish tricks " of the spurious healer.

In 1720 there was another brief swell of prosperity, not of the surest, when the South Sea

XXXI. Bubble for a time filled Epsom with its train of speculators and adventurers: "alchemists, Dutchmen, Germans, Jews"; and "gaming with every other description of profligacy and vice, prevailed to an enormous extent." And at that period several large houses were erected, "amongst them that of Baron Swasso."

Who Baron Swasso may have been we cannot guess—though his name rings like that of a possible alchemist—but at any rate he did not arrest the decadence of Epsom. The South Sea Bubble burst and Epsom fell once more. In 1736 the celebrated "Female Bone-Setter," a Mrs. Mapp, gave us a temporary glamour of popularity, though it was but a flicker. The "neighbouring gentry, however, continued their patronage, and every Monday in the summer they came to the Wells and had a public breakfast with music, dancing, and cards till about three o'clock." There is a pathetic advertisement in 1754, quite in the modern indirect style, which aims at stimulating this fleeting fashion.

"EPSOM OLD WELL. The Gentlemen and Ladies who did me the honour to breakfast at this place last Monday morning have signified their pleasure of breakfasting here every Monday during the Season; I take this opportunity to return my unfeigned thanks for the favour of so genteel an appearance, and humbly hope for the continuance of the same, which will lay under the greatest obligation their most humble servant JANE HAWKINS. Note. The Purging Waters of this place are in excellent order."

But even this genteel appearance and the

attractions mentioned in the Note failed to stimulate the flagging repute of the faded watering-place, and Epsom " became (as it now remains) a populous, wealthy and respectable village, without retaining any of its former dissipated and vicious sources of amusing." XXXI.

The vogue of Bath and of sea-bathing gave Epsom the final death-stroke as a health resort; " the modern delightful practice of sea-bathing," as Pownall forgivingly calls it. When people began to bathe in the sea, they seem indeed to have become demoralised. " The well is preserved . . . but is now only visited occasionally by strangers who, not having faith in the mineral waters, after drinking them a few times, come to the erroneous conclusion that there is no virtue in them."

There is one further flash of fashion to be recorded. Some of the emigrants of the French Revolution lit upon this peaceful neighbourhood as a haven of refuge. One group settled at Juniper Hall, whose secular and majestic cedars at the foot of Boxhill still refresh the traveller's eye. Here there resided Talleyrand and Madame de Staël, the Duc de Montmorency and M. de Jaucourt, and M. D'Arblay who was courting Fanny Burney. At West Humble were the De Broglies. Another young couple came straight from the church in which they were married to Epsom. Their name was de Gontaut, and she was destined to end as Duchesse de Gontaut, Governess of the Children of France. They were delighted with Epsom, where they inhabited a little house " close to the race-course, surrounded

XXXI. by charming country-houses. We learned later that our arrival had excited a sensation among the inhabitants of these pretty houses, who were curious to see the French people who had escaped from the disasters of their country, and in the evening peered through our window blinds to see us." The Duchess goes on to describe the races, where the English, she says, lose their habitual phlegm, become active and gay, betting with vivacity and tumult. But this little flock of fugitives soon dispersed again, leaving the faint aroma of a pleasant tradition.

Still, though the waters failed us, a miracle yet remained to be wrought on behalf of Epsom. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century a roystering party at a neighbouring country-house founded two races, in two successive years, one for three-year-old colts and fillies, the other for three-year-old fillies, and named them gratefully after their host and his house—the Derby and the Oaks. Seldom has a carouse had a more permanent effect. Up to that time Epsom had enjoyed little more than the ordinary races of a market-town. The great Eclipse, himself, who long lived in Epsom, had run there in some obscurity. But now horses, some of them unworthy to draw him in a post-chaise, were to earn immortality by winning on Epsom Downs before hundreds of thousands of spectators. Parliament was to adjourn during the ensuing century, not without debate, to watch the struggle. Ministers and ex-ministers would ride or drive down to the famous race; and in white hats with blue veils discuss the prospects of their favourites. Political

leaders would give vent to splendid groans when they realised that they had sold the winner. In the midst of the Crimean War the result of the Derby was to be recorded in General Orders. Crowds would assemble in London, and from London to Epsom, to watch the still greater crowds returning from the contest. For a week Epsom would reek of racing. During that period the eyes of the sporting section of the civilised world would be turned on the little Surrey town. Many indeed, who were in no respect sporting, became sporting for that occasion. XXXI.

It is much the same now. The Olympian dust is the same, and is still scattered by the flying horses. The world still admires—not perhaps with so concentrated a gaze. And all this excitement, enthusiasm, triumph, whatever you may call it, Epsom and the universe perhaps owe to an extra magnum of Lord Derby's choice claret, or a superfluous bottle of Lord Derby's curious port.

For two weeks, then, or for a part of them, Epsom races and revels; and recovers during the remaining fifty. The recovery is less sweet than it was, for what was once rural is now suburban. But Nature happily, as we know, is not easily expelled. There are still common land and down, still stately trees and vernal blossom, the nightingales still sing, though it may be to an asylum, the air is still racy and clear.

The time may come when this can no longer be said, when each available inch will be covered by brick or stucco, and when that which cannot be built upon, the still sacred commons, will be

XXXI. surrounded by dun streets of whitey-brown houses. Then will be the moment for the resident, who remembers and respects old, or even recent Epsom, to "twitch his mantle blue" and betake himself with his goods and chattels "to fresh woods and pastures new."

XXXII

THE TURF[1]

I FIND myself compelled to respond, or honoured by responding, for the club which I meet to-night for the first time, and with which therefore I cannot be so intimately acquainted as some of you. But there is another difficulty still. I have won this race three times in my life, but I do not ever remember being asked to dinner before. Whatever be the cause, it is only of recent years that I have become acquainted with the dinner of the Gimcrack Club; and what makes my task more difficult is that I understand that, owing to the precedents of late years—the Gimcrack Club having been in relation to the Turf very much the same as the Lord Mayor's dinner stands in relation to politics—it is given to the guest of the evening to deliver himself of some dissertation on current turf matters, and to offer suggestions for some violent reform. Of that I am quite incapable. If you welcome me here under those pretences, I must tell you at once I am an impostor. I very seldom go to races, and if I go to

[1] A speech at the annual Dinner at York of the Gimcrack Club, December 7, 1897. Lord Rosebery's bay filly, Mauchline, had won the Gimcrack Stakes at the York August Meeting of that year.

XXXII. see a particular race I usually arrive not long before the race takes place, and go very soon after it has taken place. As regards the rules of the Jockey Club, there was a time when I used to know something about them, but they have been so changed and modified since that I am informed by experts there are only two people who, in the belief of the most credulous, have any thorough acquaintance with them. One is Mr. Wetherby and the other is Mr. James Lowther, and I am not perfectly sure of Mr. James Lowther.

In those circumstances it is a matter of embarrassment to know what I am to say to you to-night. I cannot extol the merits of the animal which won the Gimcrack Stakes, to which I am indebted for this honour, because, except on the occasion when she won this historic event, she has displayed no marked excellence, and offers no prospect of it. But, after all, I can always give advice with the perpetual prerogative of a person who has nothing to say. I am a little alarmed, I confess, at the juvenile reminiscences of my friend Lord Wenlock, because I am afraid that it may encourage my sons to take in their turn to racing. If I am asked to give advice to those who are inclined to spend their time and their money on the turf, I should give them the advice that *Punch* gave to those about to marry—"Don't." That, I admit, is a discouraging remark for an assembly of sportsmen, and I perceive that it is received in the deadest silence. I will give you my reasons for that remark. In the first place, the apprenticeship is exceedingly expensive; in the next place, the pursuit is too

engrossing for any one who has anything else to do in this life; and, in the third place, the rewards, as compared with the disappointments, stand in the relation of, at the most, one per cent. An ounce of fact is worth a ton of exhortation, and I shall give you my experience; and it will be an exceedingly genial and pleasant dinner if everybody truthfully gives us his. XXXII.

I will give you my experience of the Turf, and you shall judge whether I have not some foundation for the advice that I give. A great many years ago—too many years ago from one point of view—and at an early age—much too early an age from every point of view—I conceived the ambition to win the Derby. For a quarter of a century I struggled. Sometimes I ran second, sometimes I ran third, very often I ran last; but at last the time arrived when, as Lord Wenlock reminded you, I was about to realise the fruition of my hopes. I was with the second Ladas about to win the Derby, and I ought to have been the happiest of men. Well, after a quarter of a century of fruitless expectation, I won the Derby. But what was the result? I at that time held high office, as Lord Wenlock has also reminded you, under the Crown. I was immediately attacked from quarters of an almost inspired character for owning racehorses at all. With very little knowledge of the facts, and with much less of that charity that "thinketh no evil," I was attacked with the greatest violence for owning a racehorse at all. I then made the discovery, which came to me too late in life, that what was venial and innocent in the other officers of the

XXXII. Government—in a Secretary of State or a President of the Council, for example — was criminal in the First Lord of the Treasury. I do not even know if I ought not to have learnt another lesson — that although, without guilt and offence, I might perpetually run seconds and thirds, or even run last, it became a matter of torture to many consciences if I won.

But my troubles did not end there. Shortly afterwards we had a general election, and I then found that, having received abundant buffets on one cheek from the smiter, I was now to receive them on the other. I was then assailed, or rather those associated with me were assailed, not because we were too sporting, but because we were not sporting enough. Leagues and associations with high-sounding names and unerring principles were started to attack my unfortunate supporters, on the ground that we were not supporters of sport, I having already suffered so severely from having been too much a sportsman. I say then I have a right to give advice, having suffered on both sides for being too sporting and for not being sporting enough. That is my experience.

I then hoped that my troubles were over. I withdrew into the sanctity of private life, and I felt that there, at any rate, fortune could no longer assail me, and that I should be enabled to pursue what I believe is facetiously called "the sport of Kings" without any particular detriment. But here again I was mistaken. Last year I thought, as so many of us have thought, that I possessed the horse of the century, and I believe

that I did own a very good horse until he was overtaken by an illness. But I at once began, as foolish turfites do, to build all sorts of castles in the air—to buy yachts and to do all sorts of things that my means on that hypothesis would permit. From the very moment I began to form these projects, the curse fell upon me. From October 1, 1896, to October 1, 1897, I ran second in every great race in which I ran, except two, which I won; and I think that, when I advise those who are about to race not to do so, I am justified by the experience which I have laid before you in so harrowing a manner. XXXII.

Is there no compensation to those who pursue a sport which is carried on under such difficulties? I myself am of opinion that there are friendships formed and a knowledge of the world formed on the Turf which are invaluable to any man who wishes to get on in life. There was a famous lady who lived in the middle of this century, Harriet, Lady Ashburton, who summed up her views on the subject in a remark which has been preserved by the late Lord Houghton. She said, "If I were to begin life again I should go on the Turf merely to get friends. They seem to me to be the only people who really hold together—I do not know why. It may be that each man knows something that would hang the other, but the effect is delightful and most peculiar." If that was the cause of Turf friendship, the effect would be most peculiar; but of this I am perfectly certain, that is not the real basis of Turf friendship. I know nothing that would hang any of those I have known on the

XXXII. Turf, and I am quite sure that if anybody on the Turf, or if anybody anywhere had known anything that would hang me about three years ago, I should not be in life at this moment. But there must be more than friendship—more than secrets which are too dangerous for people to carry about with them—to constitute the real bond of union on the Turf.

Of course, many men say that it is gain. I do not think anybody need pursue the Turf with the idea of gain, and I have been at some trouble to understand why I and others, under singular difficulties, have pursued this most discouraging amusement. I see my trainer looking at me from a distant table with an inquiring eye. He could tell you probably better than I could tell you; but, so far as I am concerned, the pleasures of the Turf do not so much lie on the racecourse. They lie in the breeding of a horse, in that most delightful furniture of any park or enclosure—the brood mare and the foal—in watching the development of the foal, the growth of the horse, and the exercise of the horse at home. But I do not believe that even that would be sufficient, if we had not some secret ambition to lure us on. After very careful analysis of all the facts that have come under my observation, I believe that ambition to be an anxious desire to become the owner of what is called "the horse of the century."

Whether they will ever do so or not is a matter of very great doubt in all their minds, and how they are to set about it must be a matter of still more anxious inquisition. There

is the method of purchase. I speak in the presence of a number of gentlemen, some of whom perhaps breed horses for sale or have horses for sale, and I therefore do not venture to speak of that method with disparagement; but I do not think the horse of the century will ever be acquired at auction. Then there is the method of abstract theory and historical law. There is an idea that by some connection with the Byerley Turk [1]—which in itself has a horrible flavour of the Eastern Question about it—that you may acquire the horse of the century. Lastly, there is the method of numbers—that new-fashioned method of numbers. You do something on paper that looks like a rule-of-three sum, and in a moment you have the horse of the century. XXXII.

I am not sure that we do believe in any of these ways. I believe the goddess of Fortune plays a great part in the production of the horse of the century. What we who are striving to produce that miraculous animal can fold to our bosom is this, that the century is drawing to a close, and that possibly we may have better luck in producing it in the twentieth century than we had in producing it in the nineteenth. There was a relative of mine, whose name may have been known to some of you as an eccentric lady, who lived in the East—I mean Lady Hester Stanhope. She also dreamed of having a miraculous animal of this description. She expected to possess a mare which should be born with a back like a saddle,

[1] All English racehorses are descended in the male line from the Darley Arab, the Byerley Turk, and the Godolphin Barb—represented by the stocks of Eclipse, Herod, and Matchem.

XXXII. which should carry a prophet into Jerusalem with Lady Hester by her side. She obtained the horse, but the prophet never arrived.

And across all these dreams of the future there is one cloud in the horizon. We fancy that we feel the sobering influence of the motor-car. As yet it is only in its infancy; it is, as yet, rather given to afford a mild sensation of notoriety to its patrons, combined with a considerable smell of oil and a rattle of wheels. We may not yet imagine Lord Lonsdale hunting the Quorn hounds or inspecting a foreign army from the back of a motor-car. We may not yet be able to realise his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales leading home the victorious locomotive in the national race on Epsom Downs. Let us hope, at any rate, for the best. I believe that so long as institutions like the Gimcrack Club are kept in full vigour and are not allowed to die out, we have a fair prospect of racing before us.

I must say one word in conclusion about the toast committed to my charge. It is that of the Gimcrack Club, and I see opposite me an engraving of the picture, which I am so fortunate as to possess, by Stubbs of that very beautiful little animal. I am not quite sure why it is that the Gimcrack Club was founded, and founded in York, because, as a matter of fact, I looked over his performances this morning, and I find that out of his very few defeats two of them took place on York racecourse, and his victories were usually in the south of England. We can never account for these things, and it is at any rate a great thing to have kept alive the memory of

that gallant little horse—which, I do not suppose, stood over fourteen hands when alive—for nearly a century and a half in this ancient and venerable city. He was a horse which I think anybody would fear to possess now, with the conditions that he was to run two or three four-mile heats every week for £50 ; yet having been so valuable and admired as to found a club of his own, he constantly changed hands, and was once even allowed to become the possession of a foreigner. That, I think, is perhaps a danger that we escape. There must have been heavy hearts in York when Gimcrack became the property of a Frenchman. But he was reclaimed and lived to a good old age, and so has immortalised himself.

But let me draw one concluding moral. This is the 131st dinner of the Gimcrack Club. He lived one hundred and thirty years ago. How many poets, how many philosophers, aye, how many statesmen, would be remembered one hundred and thirty years after they had lived ? May we not draw from this fact the conclusion that the sport that we honour to-night, which we believe was never better and purer than at this moment, never more honest in its followers, never pursued with greater interest for the honour, as apart from the lucre, of the Turf, may we not draw this conclusion—that this sport will not perish in our land whatever its enemies may do, and that, however festive its celebration to-night may be, a century hence our descendants will be toasting the Gimcrack Club and hailing what, I hope, will be a more reputable representative of the winner of the Gimcrack Stakes ?

XXXIII

THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE[1]

XXXIII. It is a formidable thing to succeed to your President the late Dr. Stubbs, the most learned and laborious of historians. I feel as unfit to occupy his presidential chair as his episcopal throne, and I cannot say more.

It is scarcely less formidable to be asked to open an archaeological museum when one is not an archaeologist. One has to rub up and test one's ideas, and consider whether there is any phase of archaeology which one can discuss without discredit. Archaeology to most of us is the attempt to reconstitute the remote past from the scanty materials available—from a pot, a parchment, or a coin. If this were our object to-day, I should have declined to come. To deal with the days when Buckinghamshire was a forest of beech-trees and peopled with deer, or when the Chilterns were impassable because of the robbers who haunted them, would be a task beyond my power or inclination. But when I see that the advertised list of persons of whom you have relics

[1] Presidential Address delivered at Aylesbury on July 6, 1905, being the Jubilee of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society.

in the museum comprises Louis XVIII., Lord Beaconsfield, Burke, Cowper, Oliver Cromwell, Gray, Hampden, Penn, Milton, Shakespeare, and John Wilkes, I feel that I am on firmer ground. Those names represent possible and tangible history. In truth, the history of Bucks lies chiefly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. And if I say that it lies chiefly in the eighteenth century, I do not forget the stainless Hampden or the disputed Penn. I do not forget, or at any rate I seem to remember, though I cannot verify my quotation, that when Lord Beaconsfield was asked by an historical and political opponent, where were the freeholders of Bucks who had followed Hampden to the field, he replied, "Why, where you would expect to find them—in the county of Buckingham." The county indeed is rife with seventeenth-century history. But it teems with the eighteenth. xxxiii.

And so I claim that the great epoch of Bucks was the eighteenth century, and I base my claim on the contention that the renown of Bucks rests on its political history. Civil war is not politics, it is something more. When politics have passed into civil war they have ceased to be politics. But the glory of Bucks was when the fratricidal sword had been sheathed, and men were forming, rudely and blindly perhaps, but patriotically and strenuously, the England of to-day. Buckinghamshire blossomed in the eighteenth century: the eighteenth century lingered with her when she had disappeared elsewhere, as if loth to part with her favourite region. Of this I remember two proofs, and I will give another illustration

XXXIII. later on. When there was a question between 1830 and 1840 of connecting Bucks, then in the diocese of Lincoln, with the diocese of Oxford, the Bishop of Oxford asked about the ecclesiastical character of Bucks. "Oh! top-boots or Exeter Hall," was the reply, and thereupon the Bishop declined a nearer connection. Now, though Exeter Hall belongs to the nineteenth century, the top-boots were a relic of the eighteenth. Again, the late and last Duke of Buckingham told me that when his mother went from Stowe to Wootton, or Wootton to Stowe, she always rode on a pillion behind a groom—at least as lately as 1830. Now, the pillion was pure eighteenth century. It was necessitated, no doubt, by the want of roads, which forbade a carriage; and it was probably the want of roads that delayed the entry of the nineteenth century into Bucks.

However that may be, I contend that politics have been the pride of Bucks, and that her political position was achieved in the eighteenth century, and that it lasted till politics passed out of the hands of the grandees, and became popular and democratic. I claim for Bucks that she is the most famous of English counties in the field of politics during that period. There were terrific electoral contests elsewhere: in Yorkshire, for example, and in Northamptonshire. But Yorkshire is not a county, but a province, and Northamptonshire cannot claim the continuous political life of Buckinghamshire. It is, I think, safe to say that there were more political combinations hatched in Bucks during the eighteenth

century than in all the rest of England, except London and Bath. Why was this? The reason seems to lie in the Palace of Stowe and its inhabitants—Lord Cobham and the great house of Grenville. XXXIII.

Lord Beaconsfield once declared that there is something in the air of Bucks favourable to political knowledge and vigour; and he adduced in proof of this assertion the fact that the county could claim four prime ministers. Great, I remember, was the searching of hearts at that affirmation. The list, indeed, is simple enough, if not flawless: George Grenville, Lord Shelburne, Lord Grenville, and Lord Beaconsfield himself make up the four. The list is not flawless, because though we can claim with confidence the Grenvilles and Disraeli, our claim to Shelburne is imperfect; and if we can claim Shelburne, we can on similar grounds claim Portland. For Portland had a villa at Bulstrode, where he frequently resided, quite as much as Shelburne at Wycombe; but Portland was a Nottinghamshire man, his domicile was Welbeck; while Shelburne was a Wiltshire man or an Irishman, and his domicile was Bowood.

Putting Portland and Shelburne aside as doubtful, there remain only Disraeli and the Grenvilles. Of Disraeli it is too near his time to speak. None, however, who sauntered with him at Hughenden, and heard him discourse on the porch, the oven, and the tank, could doubt his deep-seated attachment to Buckinghamshire and his Buckinghamshire home. He would, indeed, declare, with a smile of apology, as he showed his

XXXIII. guests the details of his property, that nothing could equal the egotism of a landed proprietor on Sunday afternoon. But he himself was only a brilliant accident in the life of the county; his ancient and illustrious race had only just ceased to wander, and he or his father might, but for chance, have pitched their tent elsewhere. Stowe and the Temples and the Grenvilles represent something much more ancient—a race rooted in the county for centuries; a race which long controlled the county, and at one time almost threatened to absorb it.

This political power began under the fostering influence of Lord Cobham, who was not only a politician, but a Field Marshal; and at Stowe there gathered that remarkable group which was known as the Cobham Cousins—Grenvilles, Lytteltons, and Pitts—Thomas Pitt and the terrible Cornet of horse. This powerful combination, composed of one man of genius and several men of ability, all more or less impracticable, might have governed the country for a generation had they only been able to agree. That, however, was obviously out of the question; and the Temple of Friendship, reared by Lord Cobham to contain the busts of his friends, had, long before it was finished, survived its purpose and meaning.

But it was not one group of men that embodied the political power of the dynasty of Stowe, for it continued through long generations. There was the generation of Lord Cobham, then that of Temple, George Grenville, and Pitt, brothers and brother-in-law, constantly at variance, constantly

endeavouring to patch up a formidable and fraternal peace. Then when they disappear a new generation comes on the scene—a Temple not less turbulent and active than his uncle and predecessor, with his brother, William Grenville, destined through long years to be Secretary of State, and to succeed his cousin as Prime Minister; finally, that cousin, William Pitt. XXXIII.

Then, again, that generation passes, and is succeeded by a new one. The head of the house is now Marquis of Buckingham, and is on the verge of achieving the ancestral object of ambition, and restoring the historic but sinister dukedom of the Staffords, the Villiers, and the Sheffields. He is at the head of a clan all sworn to further that object. There are in his own family, besides his own marquisate, the peerages of Grenville and Glastonbury. He has in the House of Commons men such as Wynn, and Phillimore, and Fremantle, more or less fit to sit on the front bench; he has his brother, Lord Nugent; perhaps a dozen all told. In 1821–22 there are negotiations conducted by the Duke of Wellington and Lord Londonderry on the one side, and by Lord Buckingham and Charles Wynn on the other, as between two independent States. At last the treaty is made. Lord Buckingham is made a Duke, his principal lieutenant in the House of Commons is admitted to the Cabinet, places are found for other members of the party, and in exchange their votes are given to Lord Liverpool. It is a singular transaction; it is pure eighteenth century; and it is, I suppose, the last of its kind in our annals, unless the Lichfield House compact,

XXXIII. which was in any case much less pompous and avowed, be considered analogous.

Within the next twenty years the second Duke of Buckingham had hastily joined and hastily left the Peel Cabinet, and the great Grenville epoch of the history of England had come to an end. It had lasted for more than a century. During the whole of that time there had been a Grenville finger in every political pie. During the whole of that time Stowe had been a political fortress or ambuscade, watched vigilantly by every political party; the influence of Stowe had been one which the most powerful minister could not afford to ignore; and the owner of Stowe had been the hereditary chief of a political group. Tons of correspondence survive to show the activity and power of that combination.

And the temple in which all this power was concentrated was worthy of its trust. Its magnificent avenue, its stately but not overwhelming proportions, its princely rooms of reception, its gardens, its grottoes, its shrines, still breathe the perfume of the eighteenth century. In its superb saloons we seem to expect brocades and periwigs and courtly swords: we seem to see the long procession of illustrious ghosts that in life were the favoured guests of the house — Pope, and Thomson, and Glover, Vanbrugh and Chesterfield, Pitt plighting his troth to his Hester, Horace Walpole, and a world of princes—an unrivalled succession of curious and admiring visitors from all parts of England and Europe. The house has lost its priceless collections, but no atom of its

unpurchasable charm. Bare, but still beautiful, Stowe remains the central glory of Buckinghamshire. xxxiii.

The dynasty of the Grenvilles, however, by no means exhausts the claims of Buckinghamshire to political pre-eminence. We have, besides, the remarkable family of Wharton — that Philip Wharton who married the heiress of Winchendon: his son the Marquis of Wharton, who, as the writer of "Lillibullero," almost sang James II. off his throne; who was at once a Presbyterian, a duellist, and a debauchee; who was the first electioneering strategist of his time. Macaulay in his word-sketch of him notices two features: "What shame meant he did not seem to understand"; and again, "He never forgot a face that he had once seen." Neither characteristic was likely to hinder his success, and the latter is the rarest and most precious of political qualifications. At any rate, and by divers means, he had become the Monarch of the Vale, and had built up an extraordinary edifice of political power, as is proved by the honours heaped on his son before he came of age; that son again the Philip, Duke of Wharton, who, in twelve years, hurried his brilliant talents, high fortunes, and princely position to a beggar's grave.

We may, if we care to, claim John Wilkes, perhaps not the worst of a breed which will never be extinct. He was at best the sceptical representative of an honest cause. But we are probably none of us Wilkesites, any more than he was himself. Still, the mention of Wilkes has at any rate two advantages—that it brings us to speak

XXXIII. of the borough of Aylesbury, in which we are met to-day.

Aylesbury owes its charter to its fidelity to the cause of that unhappy Queen—the first Mary—who was to marry Philip II., to be vainly lured by the supreme happiness of maternity, and to inflict quite honestly and conscientiously such cruel suffering on the loyal people of her realm. The reward was little appreciated. Four years afterwards, in the year of the Queen's death, Aylesbury, heedless of the lucrative contingencies to be associated with parliamentary representation in the future, did not take the trouble to return a member to Parliament. Fourteen years afterwards, however, a vigorous widow, Lady Pakington, widow of the lord of the manor of Aylesbury, supplemented the languid deficiencies of the corporation by nominating two members and announcing to the borough, without further ceremony, that she had elected them. The borough bowed to this imperious female, who thus carried woman suffrage further than has ever since been even advocated. A little later she obtained the election of her second husband; and imagination pauses before the possibilities which might have resulted had his determined lady enjoyed a longer life. For she only lived forty-six years, and she had already torn up the Constitution by the roots.

Wilkes was elected in 1757, when Aylesbury was already a typical eighteenth-century borough. Eighteen months before, he had written, "I am told there are many expensive customs at Aylesbury in Christmas-time, particularly about St.

Thomas' day," and, a week or two later, had approved a scheme of a shilling for each widow and half-a-crown for each poor family—to celebrate, I presume, the festival of St. Thomas. This, however, was only ground bait. For the actual election he was willing to give two guineas per man, and up to three or five if necessary. At a later election he determined to supply £5 to each of three hundred chosen electors, " and let the rest do their worst."

It is, I think, impossible not to pause here and indulge in a momentary burst of envy for these fortunate potwallopers. They, indeed, made the best of both worlds. They voted for freedom and purity to the cry of " Wilkes and Liberty," and received £5 apiece for doing so.

At a later epoch, just inside the nineteenth century, Aylesbury had reduced the art, I will not say of corruption but of political remuneration, to a science. Representatives of the candidate sat with two bowls before them. One contained punch, the other contained gold; and when a freeholder had proved his right to vote, he was given a glass of punch from one, and two guineas from the other; and then he voted by intuition for the right man.

But enough of Aylesbury; it was a specimen of an eighteenth-century borough, neither better nor worse than its neighbours. In the nineteenth century, what with enlargement of its boundaries, and frequent Reform Bills, it changed its character and became an enlightened and incorruptible constituency. But I cannot trespass on the nineteenth century; for no casuistry would include it

XXXIII. at present within the defined boundaries of archaeology.

But let us not pause another moment before proceeding to our most splendid political figure, Edmund Burke. He may not rank among our Prime Ministers, for he was never even in the Cabinet; but it is scarcely extravagant to maintain that he will survive them all. No doubt, like Mr. Disraeli, whose title he inspired, he was not a son of the soil. He was the child and friend of Ireland. But we claim him without doubt and without misgiving: he was a man of Bucks by adoption and grace. He lived in the county for thirty years—the best, and, but for his irreparable bereavement, the happiest of his life. Here he planted with his usual enthusiasm, here he spent his money like a gentleman farmer, here he wrote and dictated, here he entertained, and here he died. Nothing is left of his dear home at Gregories: of his active life in that country nothing survives but a dagger—the one he is supposed to have thrown down in the House of Commons. But his memory is still vivid among us. Nor did Westminster rob us of his remains, for his bones rest with Waller's at Beaconsfield.

But I have not yet done. So splendid are the claims that I have already recited that we are in danger of overlooking the last and the greatest of all. I am claiming for Buckinghamshire a political pre-eminence among English counties, and herein we are bound to remember, to use the language of a bidding prayer, "the King's College of our Lady of Eton," which we are proud to reckon within our boundaries; the august and

generous foster-mother of innumerable politicians, and some statesmen. To all the statesmen, and as many of the politicians as is safe or desirable, our county can lay an unquestioned claim. She did not bear them all, but she did rear them all. Learning, indeed, the beloved College did not always give; at any rate, she did not force her erudition on her froward charges. But with a full hand she imparted her unconscious but priceless graces of character: honour, courage, fellowship, friendship, manhood, loyalty, and reverence; man's duty towards himself and his neighbours. Long may that lamp shine in Buckinghamshire. Long may Eton rear men for England. Long may England own her debt to Eton. XXXIII

And now I draw to a close. I do so with a feeling that many may deem it presumption on my part to attempt to satisfy the cravings of an Archaeological Association with remarks on anything so recent as the eighteenth century. The eighteenth century they may say is not archaeology at all.

Ah, gentlemen, they forget. They forget how far we have left the eighteenth century behind. We have even turned our backs for ever on the nineteenth century, which contains the best part of the lives of some of us; we are, for good or for evil, launched into the twentieth. The uncounted days are gliding away, bringing our generation on to the dark river and the constant ferry, bearing our country buoyantly forward towards the illimitable future. We are moving every day and every minute to the period when we ourselves shall be archaeological matter. In

XXXIII. another century we who are here shall be objects of interest; in two centuries, subjects of curiosity.

And what shall we be in the thirtieth? Should our Archaeological Society assemble then, which I do not doubt for a moment, what will be the position? That is a problem which, like most other problems, we cannot solve. Of what will their exhibition consist? No doubt our successors will examine, with something between a smile and a tear, some unique specimen of those portentous hats which enshrine the brain-power of respectability—of our bankers, our legislators, and our divines. They will gather round the glass case which contains the naked mechanism of an umbrella, the tireless wheel of a bicycle, the unmelodious horn of a motor-car. Most thickly of all will they surround the surviving but crumbling skeleton of the last horse. Our paper will long have been dust, our newspapers will be a part of the air they breathe (as, metaphorically, they are now), they will have no means of deciphering or realising our manner of life except from these interesting relics. What a vista of speculation this opens! What will be their opinion of us? What a pity it is, as Mr. Balfour would say, that the operation cannot be mutual, and that we cannot form or express our opinion on them.

And they themselves—what and where will they be? My successor in the chair—by the by, will he occupy a chair?—may he not, for example, be standing on his head, which the Newer Medicine may then have discovered to be the only healthy position, when legs from disuse

shall have dwindled or disappeared? And his address? Will he deliver one, or will he communicate it to some machine which will disperse it at large to an inattentive world, or which may be placed by the roadside to be tapped by any casual wayfarer, who may happen to thirst for eloquence or knowledge? Public speaking, as at present practised, especially the oratory which perplexes banquets, will, I venture to prophesy, have long been abolished as a barbarous and mischievous absurdity. XXXIII.

And the Association itself? Will it meet on the earth, or will it float in the air, responsive to the ruling of the president, and to the modulated rays of the sun? These are questions we cannot answer, and which do not really concern us. It is enough for us that we have lived our little span, and reached the evening of our summer's day. But it is not unwise or unreasonable for the dispassionate minds of choice archaeologists to remember that there are but a few steps from the demonstrator to the subject, and that they, in a comparatively short time, must be transformed from the exponents into the objects of antiquarian investigation. It may moderate their criticism, and leaven with an element of Christian charity the acerbities of philosophical inquiry.

Be that as it may, I would fain hope, and express the hope on your behalf, that our successors, whether they meet on, or above, or below the earth, will not be unmindful of the past glories of Buckinghamshire, and that they may even be not unwilling, in their abundant toleration, to concede that we of the twentieth century—that

XXXIII. pregnant phrase of which we think so much and know so little—were, if their potent microscopes are still able to discern traces of our existence, not wholly unworthy of the traditions of the famous and beautiful county in which we dwelt.

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